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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU and Mr. Jayakar have issued a statement recording the final failure of their parleys with Mr. Gandhi and the other imprisoned leaders of the Congress Party. The Congress leaders demanded recognition of India's right of secession; a complete, responsible National Government, with full economic and military control; the right to refer to an independent tribunal all British claims which seemed to them unjust, including the Indian public debt; release of all political prisoners not found guilty of violence, with restoration of their confiscated property and repayment of fines; reinstatement of village officials who had resigned or had been dismissed; and repeal of all special ordinances. These demands were put forward as essential preliminaries to the calling off of the civil disobedience campaign and participation by Congress in the Round-Table Conference. Even then, the Congress leaders intimated that the picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops, and the illicit manufacture of salt, would continue as before. There seems little doubt that these demands were formulated, chiefly under the influence of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, after the negotiations had in fact broken down, with a view to making their resumption impossible.

* * *

While pointing out the impossibility of acceding to these demands, the Viceroy offered a sympathetic review of the cases of all persons imprisoned for non-violent political offences, adequate representation of the Congress Party at the Conference, and the withdrawal

of emergency ordinances so soon as the civil disobedience campaign should be called off. The only reply to these offers was a rhetorical denunciation of "the intolerable British domination," and the hard-heartedness of the Government of India. The inevitable result has been to widen the breach between the Congress and the Government, to stiffen the attitude of the European community in India, and to throw British diehards into transports of indignation at the humiliation accepted by the Government of India in allowing the negotiations to proceed. We believe, on the other hand, that the patriotic and courageous efforts of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar were well worth making; that they have served a useful purpose, if only by bringing into sharp relief the intransigence of the Congress leaders and the need for constructive co-operation by Indian Moderates; and that the prospects of the Round-Table Conference are by no means destroyed by the abstention of the Congress. We discuss these issues more fully in another column.

* * *

The Council of the League of Nations opened its Sixtieth Session on September 8th with a discussion of the Mandates Commission's Palestine Report. The rapporteur, M. Procopé (Finland), was careful to emphasize the difficulty of the task before the Mandatory Power, and the approval accorded by the Commission to much of its work. He ended by moving a resolution requesting the Mandatory Power "to adopt such measures as it thinks fit to give effect to the recommendations and conclusions contained in the reports of the Commission and of the rapporteur, and to take the

action suggested by the Commission in its observations on the annual report for 1929." Mr. Henderson, for the British Government, while defending his Government's action in replying to the report, frankly admitted the right and duty of the Commission to offer criticisms and suggestions, and accepted the terms of the resolution, which was adopted. Mr. Henderson added that Sir John Hope Simpson's report on the land development and immigration problems had now been received, and that the British Government hoped shortly to announce measures which would "serve to promote goodwill between the two sections of the population." A further statement on this subject will be eagerly awaited, for the land question, as we have always held, is the real crux of the problem of Palestine.

* * *

Second thoughts on the attitude towards fiscal policy displayed by the Trade Union Congress at its Nottingham Conference confirm the view expressed last week—that the trade union world is still poles away from approving an out-and-out policy of Protection, whether in the Beaverbrook variant or any other. Mr. Bevin's speeches showed that the famous report of the Economic Committee was framed against a background of fear—fear lest other economic blocs, Russian, American, or European, should speedily consolidate themselves and put pressure upon us; and fear lest the raw materials controlled inside the British Empire might be inadequately or unwisely developed, or else made the instruments for exploitation of the workers. Thus Mr. Bevin stated that

"a fiscal weapon might be necessary as an instrument in certain circumstances, though it could not be the basis of a solution of any problem at all, *least of all the problem of unemployment*";

but he stigmatized the idea of a tariff on steel as "a tax to maintain inefficiency and out-of-date methods." The Economic Committee's Report, he said, in a vigorous and impressive reply to a well-argued debate,

"did not ask for tariffs or for Free Trade. It asked for regular economic conferences with representatives of the Dominions and Colonies every three or four years."

This is good Liberal policy, as well as sound common sense.

* * *

In the rest of its proceedings, the T.U.C. Conference showed a strange mixture of irresponsibility and common sense. The Government were urged to take such emergency measures as would enable the unemployed to be offered work at trade union rates and conditions—regardless of whether the resulting costs would be excessive for the world market. Although M. Albert Thomas wisely counselled the Congress to make sure of the adoption of the 48-hour-week by other countries before pressing for a further reduction in British working hours, resolutions were passed asking for a 44-hour-week inclusive of meal-times (or an effective working week of 39 hours) and holidays with full pay; while Mr. Bromley led the Congress to demand the nationalization of banking, in spite of the fact that the Macmillan Committee has not yet presented the results of its inquiries into industry and finance. The wildest demand, however, was for compulsory retirement pensions at 60—at the trifling estimated cost of £285,000,000 a year—a proposal foisted on the Congress by its rigid Standing Orders, in spite of Mr. Bevin's express declaration that they had better be sensible and

seek to achieve such pensions at the comparatively practicable age of 65.

* * *

This proposal, together with much else of the Conference's proceedings, resulted from preoccupation with unemployment and anxiety as to the effects of rationalization on the position of the workers. The T.U.C.'s desire to protect its members against the worst evils of ill-considered rationalization is sound and wise; but, unhappily, the debates disclosed little or no understanding that the changes of the economic world necessitate flexibility and mobility amongst the workers as well as in industry itself; and until this plain fact is recognized and embodied in policy, there is a grave danger that the trade unions will obstruct essential rationalization instead of furthering it. Nevertheless, these errors and excesses were to some extent offset by the sanity of the debate on family allowances, and by Mr. Clynes's veiled but powerful advocacy of gradualness—a doctrine which naturally commended itself to delegates in inverse ratio to their individual irresponsibility. Mr. Clynes, incidentally, tempered this unpleasant argument to some extent by pledging the Government to amend the Trades Disputes Act of 1927 at the earliest possible date—a pledge which the Conference hastened to nail down with a strong, independent resolution of its own.

* * *

Mr. C. T. Cramp is to be congratulated on the courage and honesty he displayed in moving the rejection of the Majority Report of the Joint Committee on the Living Wage, with its endorsement of a system of family allowances estimated to cost £70,000,000 a year. As spokesman for the General Council, he recommended the adoption of the alternative proposal of the Minority Report for the expenditure of any available funds on an extension of the social services. It is a tribute to the ultimate sanity of the Congress that he carried his motion by such an overwhelming majority. His arguments followed closely THE NATION's criticism of the Majority Report a few weeks ago, but introduced the further point that a system of family allowances would strike at the roots of trade-union organization and teach people to look to the State for support, rather than fight their own battles through their Unions. Mr. Cramp foresaw the granting of family allowances being used as an excuse by employers to beat down wages in the weaker industries.

* * *

The *coup d'état* in Peru has been followed by a revolution—fortunately almost a bloodless revolution—in Argentina. The financial and commercial interests of Great Britain in Argentina are so large, and that country plays so great a part in the food supply of the British people, that the overthrow of President Irigoyen would be a matter of grave concern if it portended an Argentine relapse into the anarchy of old-time South American politics. Happily there is no occasion for such fears. The Argentinos are a progressive people who pride themselves on their political stability. They rose against President Irigoyen on the ground of his endeavour to mask a dictatorship under the forms of constitutionalism, by reducing Ministers and heads of Departments to mere lay figures, and establishing a purely personal rule. The Provisional Government formed by General Uriburu, practically without opposition, has announced its intention to dissolve Parliament and hold free elections at which, as a pledge of good faith, the members of the Junta undertake that none of them will stand for the Presidency. Assurances are

given that all facilities already promised for the British Industries Exhibition, to be held in Buenos Aires next March, will be faithfully accorded and that the Provisional Government will do all in its power to cement the friendship between Argentina and Great Britain.

* * *

On Sunday Germany will go to the polls. It is not believed that the new Reichstag will be very different from the old. The extreme parties will probably make substantial gains, chiefly owing to Germany's heavy unemployment. The National Socialists are expected relatively to profit the most. The economic distress of a substantial part of the middle and former propertied classes is in their favour, and they are also aided by the division in the camp of the Right; the Nationalists (at whose expense they have recently increased their strength) will go to the polls in three fractions. The Communists too are counting on new victories. The hope of a revival of Liberalism through the founding of the new State Party has largely disappeared since the People's Party (which the State Party hoped to attract) has moved to the Right instead of to the Left. But, all in all, it is not expected that the strengthening of the extremist parties will overturn the existing political stalemate. It is perhaps significant that, on the eve of the poll, there are signs of a *rapprochement* between the Centre and the Socialists, with the object of re-creating a grand coalition which would range, presumably, from Socialists to moderate Conservatives. If this should be the outcome of the elections, the dark rumours about a "legal dictatorship," for coping with a situation in which no group of parties could command a majority, will all evaporate.

* * *

The Lena Goldfields affair contains many peculiar features, and the arbitral award, however just it may be, leaves a number of mysteries unresolved. In very broad outline, the award justified the Lena Company's claim that it had been put in an impossible position by the Soviet Government's recent attitude, and that, though in former years the Soviets had carried out in general the terms of the concession agreement of 1925, Russian policy suffered so violent a sea-change at the close of last year as to constitute a breach of contract. These conclusions led the two arbitrators—Dr. Otto Stutze, of the Freiburg Mining Academy (the so-called super-arbitrator) and Sir Leslie Scott, the arbitrator appointed by Lena—to award the company a sum of nearly £13,000,000 as compensation for past losses and anticipated profits. But what were the real reasons for the Soviet Government's violent change of attitude? Why was Lena, which formed an essential component of the Five Year Plan, suddenly harassed in this fashion and practically dispossessed? And what was the company's justification for abruptly throwing in its hand earlier this year? These matters the arbitral award does not discuss fully or at all—though there is doubtless sound reason for its silence about them. Unluckily, even the most satisfactory conceivable explanations will not lessen the harm the Lena affair will do. The mere appearance of breach of contract makes confidence impossible; and without confidence there can be no trade. Those responsible for the Russian policy towards Lena have committed an act which, at best, is one of the grossest folly.

* * *

Minority affairs are developing badly. Early last Saturday morning, less than twenty-four hours after the delivery of sentence against them, four Slovenes

who had been charged with high treason before the Special Fascist Tribunal for the defence of the State were executed in Trieste. By their own confession, these men were terrorists; but their terrorism was aimed at freeing their own people—the Slovenes of Istria, whom the peace settlement incorporated in Italy—from Fascist rule, and at restoring their lost liberties. This is a policy which liberal European opinion has at least condoned in other circumstances in the past. A few days later the Berlin correspondent of the *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN* reported serious repressive measures by the Polish Government against its Ukrainian minority. Meanwhile, the Congress of European National Minorities, which has been holding its sixth annual conference at Geneva, has issued a statement highly critical of M. Briand's proposals for European economic union. "Each European," they observe, "should realize a national life in conformity with his culture, with the principle of action which that necessitates, and, if necessary, in close contact with this conationals, regardless of the demarcation of States." Taking all these facts together, it is clear that the problem of minorities is a very long way from settlement, and that unless the wisest and most conciliatory policy is pursued by the Governments concerned—and by the minorities themselves—it may at any moment become acute.

* * *

The hundredth annual meeting of the British Association has provided less sensational copy for the popular Press than some of its predecessors, but satisfaction was generally expressed among the members at the high level of interest, whilst the general public certainly could not complain that the scientists held themselves remote from practical interests. It was a tribute to Professor Gregory that, even in his unavoidable absence, his presidential address to the economic section, on Rationalization and Technological Unemployment, provoked keen debate. Opinions differed sharply as to the proportion of the present unemployment which could be attributed to rationalization, but there was general agreement that we in this country had no option but to proceed with it, and that the longer we delayed the worse it would be for us. Professor Clay argued in discussion that a small industry working at a profit was of much greater use to us, from the point of view of employment, than a larger industry working at a loss, because the former had in it the possibility of expansion. He cited the cotton industry as a case where money had been sunk in interest on loans, which might, far more fruitfully, have been applied to re-equipment.

* * *

Another discussion of immediate, practical importance was opened by Sir John Mann, who pleaded for a supply of homes intermediate in quality and price between the present Council houses and the slums. Evidence is accumulating that there is an enormous unsatisfied demand for homes at rents in the neighbourhood of eight shillings a week. Such homes are best supplied by providing either a very simple type of tenement building, or by reconditioning older houses. "Good second-hand houses are better than neglected slums, just as a decent second-hand suit of clothes, cleverly patched perhaps, is better than rags." Sir John Mann also put in a plea for Octavia Hill management, which most experienced social workers would endorse, but which is likely to meet with opposition from most Labour councillors, on the ground that it involves "meddling" with the private concerns of tenants.

THE CONGRESS AND THE CONFERENCE

DOWN to the last moment we had cherished some faint hope for the success of the efforts made by Mr. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to reach an understanding with the Congress leaders. That hope has now been finally extinguished, but the breakdown of the negotiations does not mean—it is very far from meaning—that our hopes for the success of the Round-Table Conference are doomed to similar disappointment.

It was clear from the first that the mediators' mission was one of extreme difficulty. It became clear, some months ago, that Mr. Gandhi, the Nehrus, father and son, and the inner circle of their supporters, had persuaded themselves that the participation of the Congress in the Round-Table Conference would be a tactical mistake. Mr. Gandhi explained his attitude in an interview which was reported in the German Press. He considered that the Conference, containing many Indians of strong sectarian views, would merely advertise to the world the communal difficulties inherent in any constitution-making for India. He was therefore anxious that the Congress, which itself has strong "fissiparous tendencies," should keep away from the Conference, and remain, in theory at any rate, a united nationalist group. There are, of course, several important Congress leaders, especially in the East of India, who do not agree with Mr. Gandhi. In Bengal, where the influence of the late Mr. C. R. Das is still powerful, there are many politicians who hold extreme views, but believe, nevertheless, in working through such public bodies as exist at present, and would like to attend the Conference. With most prominent politicians in gaol, it is difficult to follow the trend of nationalist opinion, but now that the rupture between Mr. Sen Gupta and Mr. Subashchandra Bose has developed into an open and noisy quarrel, there is little doubt that the former would be prepared to co-operate with the Government on the sort of terms which were offered to Mr. Gandhi. The intransigence of the Nehrus is partly due to a different outlook, and partly to the fact that they have not the Bengali's experience of the horrors of a long anarchical agitation. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar had thus to attack the very delicate task of persuading the present leaders of the Congress to abandon what they believed to be a strong tactical position; and in undertaking and persevering with this task, the two Moderate leaders gave a striking display of moral courage, for only an Indian can appreciate the pressure, amounting almost to social ostracism, which is placed upon a Hindu politician who dares to run counter to extremist doctrines and tactics.

The actual demands put forward by Mr. Gandhi are of little interest. Their promulgation is a mere gesture, made after any idea of an agreement had been abandoned, and they probably bear little relation to the subjects discussed in Yerawda Gaol. Theoretically, there is nothing inherently absurd in the chief demands. The "right to secede" is really an academic point, implicit in the ultimate attainment of full Dominion status. Control of the Army is an essential part of

complete self-government. The justice of charging India with certain sums, which now form part of her national debt, is a subject which may legitimately be brought up for discussion in the near future. The demands, however, not only included many matters which are outside the Viceroy's powers, but were made in a form which rendered further discussion impossible. It is now clear that the Round-Table Conference must be held without any "official" representatives from the Congress Party. There is a possibility of one or two individual members attending, but the negotiations have continued so long that it is unlikely that any serious cleavage will occur in the Congress Group, and it is scarcely practicable for the Government to postpone the Conference, in the vague hope that they may draw a few representatives from the predominant Nationalist Party.

But although the immediate outlook seems rather gloomy, there may be some advantages in holding the Conference without the presence of such a strong, disruptive influence as the Congress Party. The obvious danger of increasing unrest in India may be minimized, if the British Government shows sufficient wisdom and statesmanship. It is essential that, from the very beginning, the Conference should receive and deserve the very widest publicity in Britain, India, and, as far as possible, in other countries. It is unfortunate that there should be in the Cabinet so many men who have been accustomed, for the last twenty or thirty years, to use vague and rather sloppy phraseology about India. People in Great Britain probably do not realize the prominence given to quotations from the Prime Minister's earlier works in much Nationalist propaganda, and the consequent need that all future utterances should be clear-cut, and free from verbiage.

Another most important point is that no attempt should be made to hide the fact that the Conference is necessarily lop-sided. It is not only that some forty or fifty men cannot really "represent" a sub-continent, but that, in the absence of Congress representatives, some interests will inevitably be over-weighted. This fact should be clearly recognized, and certain allowances made for it. The Princes will, of course, be in a very powerful position. Compared with any group from British India they will be both wealthier and better organized. They have excellent advisers, plenty of British friends, and the tactical advantage of not having to put forward concrete suggestions. It is, perhaps, as well that they are likely to be the "star turn" of the Conference, for the problem of "Indian India" has been shelved too long, and it is quite possible that the absence of the Congress Party will make it easier for the Princes to come to some working agreement with the representatives of British India as to their participation in a Federal Government. There is, in fact, what Indians like to call a "thick rumour" that there have been already some discussions between the Princes and the Moderates, and that the former are prepared to consider favourably any scheme for Federation on the lines of the Simon Report, provided that they can have adequate safeguards on the subject of tariffs, and that the functions of the Central Government are limited to

certain definite subjects, leaving residuary powers to the Provincial and State Governments.

The Mohammedans will also gain from the absence of a political group which is predominantly Hindu. Here again the results may be beneficial, for the presence of a strong and comparatively united Moslem group will tend to concentrate attention on the actual form of the Provincial and Central Governments, and the powers of the executives; for these are the questions which vitally affect minorities. The commercial interests, Indian and European, will also be very powerfully represented, and however indefensible this may be from a purely democratic standpoint, the presence of these two groups of men, racially antagonistic but with many common interests, is likely to keep discussion along practical lines, and prevent the proceedings of the Conference from degenerating into futile recriminations and legal quibbling. There is no doubt that Indian business men are very anxious to control the Departments of Commerce and Finance in the Central Government, and that British business men might be prepared to accept a commercial convention as a safeguard. Such a method of approach is nowhere envisaged by the Simon Report, but it is likely to lead to some definite results, and may form a change from the fascinating but somewhat fruitless occupation of making paper constitutions for a future All-India Government.

No one can foretell the course of events in India during the next six months, but there are signs that the more violent features of the agitation are causing a reaction. The early days of the Conference, and especially the speeches made by Government representatives, will decide whether those Nationalist politicians who are of the Congress Party will rally round the leaders who have just broken off negotiations, or will tend to break away from them. It would undoubtedly have an extremely reassuring effect if the Government could make it quite clear from the beginning of the Conference that we are pledged to grant Dominion status, and that we do not intend to hold up that grant a moment longer than is necessary for the discharge of our responsibilities to the Indian people as a whole. It would also help to remove a multitude of misunderstandings if the "right to secede," which is likely to be accepted as an inherent right of the Dominions, could be recognized as an inevitable accompaniment of the full attainment of Dominion status. It is probable that in India, as in South Africa, the admission of the "right to secede" would give the death-blow to the secession movement. If these two points could be plainly stated, and the Conference could then settle down to the more workaday problems of the powers of the Provincial Governors and the future of the Indian Army, there should be at least some chance of a return to normal conditions in 1931, and a period of constructive political work. That work will undoubtedly be impeded if the Congress Party, as a whole, maintains its policy of non-co-operation; but it will be very difficult for the Congress leaders to keep their followers united in support of such a policy if the Round-Table Conference shows that the British Government and the Indian Moderates are capable of constructing a practicable, working scheme without them.

It will be something of a tragedy if such men as

Mr. Gandhi and the Nehrus are excluded, by their own act, from a share in the final solution of the problem of India. The path of the British Government, at least, is clear. It is to go ahead resolutely with the work of implementing their own promises, without regard either to the abstention of the Congress leaders or the clamour of the less responsible British reactionaries.

SOME OF INDIA'S REAL PROBLEMS

By B. SHIVA RAO.

STRANGE as it may seem, particularly at the present time, with a crisis in Indian politics, it is nevertheless true that India's real problems are social and economic rather than political. One of the tragedies in modern India is that many of her best men have been compelled to throw themselves into the struggle for political liberty, who, in normal times, would apply their minds to the solution of her extremely complex problems in other spheres. But they are under no illusions as to the immediate results of self-government: they realize that with political freedom will emerge a host of difficulties that will tax—and may, for a time, even baffle—all their resources and gifts of statesmanship.

From my experience of the trade-union movement in India, I am convinced that public health must command the first place in the programme of any party that may come into power. Twelve to fourteen million deaths—on a conservative estimate—is the brief but poignant estimate of the toll levied by influenza during the disastrous epidemic of 1918-19 in the Census report for the decade. The Public Health Commissioner of the Government of India refers to eight million cases of malaria recorded in a year in the dispensaries and hospitals of the country. How many more go unrecorded in a land where medical facilities are few and the compilation of statistics is still in a rudimentary stage must be left to one's imagination. Then there are kala-zar, hookworm, plague, small-pox, and cholera which devastate regularly vast areas of the country. Our municipalities persistently return an infantile mortality of 300 and, in several cases, more, per 1,000 births. And yet, according to the latest report of the Government of India, only 1 per cent. of the total revenue of the country is spent on public health!

A self-governing India is certain to deal with the question of public health far more seriously than now, and set apart adequate funds for the purpose. The trouble to-day is that so much is needed for the Army in India that the essential services have to be starved. One of the most significant passages in the Simon Commission's Report refers to the expenditure on the Army, which represents 62½ per cent. of the current expenditure of the Government of India. It is frank enough to add that it is the highest proportion in the world. During the years 1913-28, while expenditure on defence rose in Britain by nearly 49 per cent. and in the Dominions by 33 per cent., the increase in India was just 100 per cent. Let me leave out of account the constitutional implications of what is, virtually, an army of occupation; for my present purpose, it is sufficient to point out that public health receives but 1 per cent. and education 6 per cent. of the total revenues of the country.

The improvement of health conditions in India will create, I have no doubt, new problems. India's difficulty, as the Famine Commission observed fifty years ago, was—and has always been—over-population. Migration has

relieved the tension somewhat during the present century; but the stream of emigrants to Ceylon and the Federated Malay States, which are two of the favoured areas for our surplus population, has been visibly thinning in recent years. Emigration, therefore, as a means of relief, should, for the future, be ruled out. Nature has protested in drastic ways against the tendency in India towards over-population, by famines and epidemics. One of the most interesting features of influenza in 1918-19 was that mortality was heaviest in the reproductive age-period and more among young women than men. The consequence was a heavy fall in birth-rate for two or three years following the epidemic. The Census report of 1931 will, no doubt, have some revelations to make on the rate of growth of population. But one thing seems certain: improvement in our health conditions will only create a bigger population problem for the future, particularly with no prospects of emigration on an appreciable scale. There is only one remedy to which India would do well to turn her attention at once—birth control. A movement has recently been started to carry on propaganda in Madras, and is going through the inevitable baptism of ridicule.

Next in order—but not in importance—is education. Like public health, education has been “a transferred subject,” that is, under Ministerial control, in the provinces. But in common with all other transferred subjects, education has suffered greatly from lack of funds. As I have already pointed out, only 6 per cent. of the revenue goes to education. The need for expansion is strikingly apparent in the fact that 94 per cent. of the population cannot read or write. The Hartog Committee, which was an auxiliary body to the Simon Commission, to deal exclusively with the growth of education, has made an illuminating report. High praise has deservedly been bestowed on Indian Ministers of Education in all the provinces for their anxiety to carry out schemes for the widespread diffusion of education. The annual cost of making it free and compulsory in the primary stage, for boys and girls, is reckoned at, roughly, fifteen million pounds (in addition to current expenditure). India will certainly make the necessary sacrifice, in the shape of additional taxation, if she can be convinced that no economies are possible. But it will be impossible to make out a case, with no check placed on the Army's insatiable appetite. Far-reaching schemes to broaden the basis of secondary education have long been overdue in India; it is incredible that there is so little provision for technical education. No task will be more difficult—or more fascinating—than that of the Ministers of Education in a self-governing India.

These two problems, public health and education, lie at the roots of most of the existing difficulties. It is a common complaint that Indian labour is inefficient; but no consideration is given to the chronic ill-health of the worker, his semi-starved condition and his illiteracy. That he can turn out any work at all and prove equal to the strain of factory conditions is to me a wonder. But no one who wishes India well can view with enthusiasm the rate of industrialization of the country. Does the sceptic demand proofs? Let him visit the mill areas in Bombay and Ahmedabad, the *bustis* (slum areas) of any industrial city, to have his eyes opened to the horrors of introducing the factory system in a country where it is alien to the people's natural instincts. The appalling housing conditions, the misery and squalour of the working classes, the terrible social evils resulting from a heavy disparity in sex ratios of the industrial areas must convince anyone that behind Mr. Gandhi's wholesale denunciations of machinery there is an element of sound reason. To-day, the spinning-wheel may be a symbol of revolt against the domination of

British economic interests over India. In the future, I hope it will embody something more positive and lead India to the organization of her cottage industries.

To one other problem I shall refer, more briefly: the regrouping of forces in India in the near future. Already, one perceives the rapid growth of capitalist and landlord organizations. The political conditions of the present have made separation on a racial basis somewhat inevitable. But with their alteration, an alliance between these forces, if not a fusion, is clearly among the probabilities. The political divisions of the present are also bound to give way before the realities of power. The extension of the franchise—on which there seems to be unanimity—will give a powerful stimulus to the organization of the working classes, particularly the industrial wage-earners. The trade-union movement in India is destined to play a great part in the developments of the next decade. It has already shown that its reactions will not be only in the economic sphere: in the solution of the problem of untouchability, I can think of no movement so powerful as the trade unions. In fact, it is the biggest democratic movement in India to-day.

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

DR. ADDISON'S new Bill is likely to be a disappointment, not only to his own party, but to everyone seriously interested in the future of agriculture. If ever there was a time for a bold and comprehensive scheme, that time is now, but there is nothing in this Bill which can even help to reduce our present chaotic system to some kind of order. The only new principle introduced into the Bill is that if English producers choose to form themselves into associations, they may be given power to force other similar producers into a marketing scheme. They have no power to force the foreign producer into the scheme, but a group of, say, potato growers in any district, or possibly over the whole of England, may be given power to prevent any sales of English potatoes except through certain channels, and will also have power to regulate “the kind, variety, and grade of product” to be sold, the quantity to be sold, and also the terms on which it may be sold. This is the weapon with which the English farmers, only one group out of many competitors in the English market, are supposed to regulate market conditions. It is clear to anyone with practical knowledge of modern conditions that the whole scheme is a politician's dream, entirely divorced from actual facts.

The business of feeding the English is on an immense scale. The capital sunk in the distribution and retailing of meat, milk, fruit and vegetables, bread, beer, and other food-stuffs is, of course, to be reckoned in millions. England is peculiar in the excessive number of its food shops, proportionately far higher per head of population than any European country. Most of these shops, apart from dairies, look to the importers for the bulk of their supplies, and the country is chiefly fed by these enormous streams of imports flowing through London, Liverpool, Harwich, and other ports. It is quite clear that English farmers, even if it were desirable, are quite incapable of entering into this business of importing and retailing foreign foodstuffs. The most that the English producer can do is to sell his produce in parts of the country, like small provincial towns, where the stream from the ports to the retailer flows less strongly, or else try to force his produce into the main stream. This dilemma is easiest seen in the meat trade. In London, where the importing stream naturally flows strongest, over 80 per cent. of the meat sold is foreign,

and English meat is confined to a small luxury trade in the West End and a low quality trade in the East End. On the other hand, there are many provincial towns where over half the meat sold is English, and foreign competition is comparatively weak. The farmers therefore have the choice of sending their best meat to the local market, from which the poorer grade stuff will probably find its way to London, or forming a society which will attempt to force their better grades on to the city markets, and leave their poorer grades for local butchers. The object of all co-operative society enthusiasts is to encourage farmers to tackle the main markets, sending their best products to compete with the best foreign products in the most highly competitive markets.

It is certain that, even with compulsory powers over other producers, farmers' societies are not likely to enter successfully into the retailing business, the only possible exception being the one agricultural "sheltered industry," the retailing of fresh milk. In those parts of the country where the milk trusts are not firmly entrenched it is possible that farmers' creameries might extend their efforts to direct dealings with the consumer, but it is shown in the latest account of co-operative ventures by the Horace Plunkett Foundation that of the thirty-five existing co-operative creameries only four attempt to retail milk. The rest merely provide a convenient *entrepôt* for those farmers who do not or cannot sell direct to one of the large wholesale and retailing firms, like the United Dairies. If Dr. Addison intends his societies to replace these firms, then he must begin to think in terms of millions instead of the £500,000 which may be used to help these enterprises. Co-operative marketing societies for other commodities are clearly excluded from retailing unless they are prepared to handle foreign produce as well, and push their way into the already overcrowded shopkeeping business. Their only function will be to collect, grade, and put their members' produce on the wholesale market. If they are given compulsory powers they may be able to drive out of business some of the middlemen who handle only English produce, an unimportant group, but they will not touch the large-scale middlemen of Smithfield, Covent Garden, and other markets who handle both foreign and home-grown produce.

It is fairly clear that even with such commodities as potatoes, in which home-grown produce is important, an English producers' "pool" will not be able to steady the market. It may be best to consider this trade in more detail, as it is about the most favourable one from Dr. Addison's point of view. The difficulty in this business is the instability of the market, due to the facts that the demand is not very elastic, and that in a moderately good season the market is easily "glutted." Under the new Bill, if an all-England scheme was accepted, no one would be able to sell potatoes except those who have received a permit, and in plentiful years this permit would presumably be based on their allowed acreage. The small producer, like a cottager, who found himself with an unexpected surplus, would have to throw his extra potatoes to the pigs, or convey them secretly to his neighbours. The co-operative organization would have to sell its potatoes through the ordinary channels, in competition with those from Holland and elsewhere. It would, however, have no guarantee that it could sell even the quota which it wanted to put upon the market. The smaller the quota which it took from the English producer, the better the market would be for the Dutch or German grower and the more they would put upon the market. In the end there would be nothing to prevent the home grower, after having first had

his acreage limited, and then been told to consume a proportion of his stock on the farm, finally discovering that his society had sold his produce in a completely glutted market. One year of this would kill the idea of co-operative marketing in England.

If these co-operative societies, even with compulsory powers, are not able to steady prices, it is impossible to see any real justification for giving them such powers, especially over production. If we consider the co-operative ventures, slightly over a hundred, which undertake the marketing of farmers' produce, they will nearly all be found to be small undertakings chiefly engaged in collecting and grading the eggs, poultry, and fruit sent from small holdings, or else dealing with milk in areas where direct sale to town retailers is difficult. Altogether they handle much less than 2 per cent. of our total agricultural output, and they are simply middlemen's organizations, replacing men like higglers. When the co-operative venture takes the form of a packing station or model dairy it is worthy of every encouragement, but it is very doubtful whether they should be given compulsory powers over districts. In a year like the present, when fruit pulp is almost unsellable, an unfortunate farmer or private individual who happened to have enough fruit to make him a "producer" might very well have found himself forced to contribute to an organization from which he would have received back a sum for his fruit which would not have repaid the cost of picking. If England were divided up into thousands of little farms, of about the same size and capacity, it might be easier to organize the compulsory marketing of some agricultural side-line like eggs or fruit, but, as things are, any society which attempted to enforce its control over a district would find itself up against a heterogeneous collection of large and small farmers, of cottagers and country gentlemen, of amateurs, and of producers who are themselves middlemen.

It is equally doubtful whether any advantage would be gained by allowing creameries to force local producers into their fold. Milk which passes through such a creamery, either to be sold to some "wholesale-retailer" or else manufactured, must clearly take a longer and much less profitable route than milk which is sold under the National Farmers' Union agreement direct to the town retailer, or which the farmer retails himself. Creameries are, in fact, used by those to whom the latter method of disposal is not available, and if the creamery attempts to pay the N.F.U. rate it will almost invariably fail. The writer speaks from somewhat bitter experience as he took part in such a venture, which started under the best auspices, but drifted into liquidation when it tried to pay its members the N.F.U. rate. This venture would probably have received both a State grant and also powers of compulsion in the county, if the new Bill had been in force. The grant would have postponed the inevitable liquidation, but the compulsory powers would have caused the most bitter heart-burning amongst those who had to give up their old contracts with London firms in order to take up one financially similar, but on which they would ultimately have been paid twelve shillings in the pound. The other type of organization, the large-scale milk "pool" which undertakes retailing, is a development only possible in parts where there is no powerful retailing trust in existence. This is about the only case where a group of producers might with advantage have compulsory powers, but even here the State grant of a monopoly over a small part of a large trade is a doubtful innovation.

G. T. GARRATT.

PRACTICAL POLITICS

The Yugoslav Dictatorship announces its intention to enforce not merely acquiescence but whole-hearted co-operation in its work of destroying the old political ideas and associations.

DEMOCRACY, we are often told,
May (possibly) have a heart of gold,
But is feather-brained, and its deepest schemes
Are nothing but visionary dreams
That turn aside from the ruthless real
In hopeless quest of a dim ideal.
If you want a practical working plan,
You must look around for a super-man,
With the keen, cold eye and the iron grip
That make him fit for dictatorship.
Of these great truths there's a demonstration
In the latest Yugoslav proclamation.
"Serbs, and Croats, and mild Slovenes,
You must learn what the Triune Kingdom means";
Says Jivkovitch, "You must cast aside
Your cherished habits of racial pride;
You must cast aside all your superstitions
Of century-old, well-loved traditions;
You must cast aside as profane illusions
Your old political institutions,
Especially those that gave a choice
Of parties, each with a different voice.
If you think at all, you must all agree
Now and for ever to think with me.
And I bid you note that it won't suffice
To acquiesce in the sacrifice;
In all our works you must take your part
With vim and zest and a joyful heart,
Loving the yoke that you had not sought,
Praising the King in your every thought;
Whatever you feel, or hope, or dream
Must be authorized by the new régime."
Such is the practical, working plan
Of a practical, realist, super-man.

MACFLECKNOE.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MATERNAL MORTALITY

SIR,—Whilst I welcome the Interim Report of the Departmental Committee on Maternal Mortality and Morbidity for the valuable information it contains, I cannot join Mrs. Hubback, whose article you published in your issue of August 16th, in regarding the policy it enunciates as "the very Bible for tackling the problem."

This policy has been advocated by officials of the Ministry for several years past; I am of opinion that the time is now ripe for a more advanced and comprehensive policy.

I am one of the large body of people who cannot assent to the departmental recommendation that the greater share of responsibility for the extended ante-natal care now demanded, and the entire responsibility for the confinement shall be left to the midwife, with her brief training grafted on to an elementary school education after an interval perhaps spent in a factory or shop.

The Committee emphasizes again and again the undoubted fact that the person responsible for ante-natal supervision should be responsible for attendance during labour. Yet it is not proposed that the doctor who makes the ante-natal examination shall even put in an appearance at the labour of women whose confinement is anticipated to be normal.

As Sir Alexander Simpson, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Emeritus Professor of Midwifery in the University of Edinburgh, has justly observed, and as unfortunate experience constantly teaches—no labour can be classed as normal until it has terminated normally. Hæmorrhage, inertia, an adherent placenta, and many other abnormal conditions, above all, the dreaded puerperal fever, may and

do appear without warning in cases where difficulty was least expected. In such cases the midwife would, as now, enlist the aid of a medical practitioner. Summoned thus tardily (if he or she arrive whilst the mother and infant still live, which is not always the case), the doctor will be at grave disadvantage in dealing with the emergency. The Committee observe that, in many of the deaths investigated, the midwife probably failed to send for the doctor as soon as she ought to have done.

Moreover, there is the question of experience; the doctor who but rarely enters the lying-in room to treat obstetric emergency is less able to deal with such a case than one who is constantly attending women in labour. No two women are alike, no two labours precisely the same; all vary in some slight degree from the perfect normal and from the cases observed when the doctor was undergoing a training, the brevity of which the Committee deplores.

Lady Barrett, Dean of the Royal Free Hospital, made the following pregnant utterance the other day: "I believe that ante-natal work is still in process of growth, and it is only those persons who watch cases in labour who gradually realize what are the important things to observe in pregnancy." "The physiology of pregnancy is almost an unknown world," says Dr. Veitch Clark, the M.O.H. for Manchester. Eardley Holland expresses his belief that far more women lose their lives in childbirth from lack of skilled attention in labour than from lack of ante-natal care. He complains that the value of ante-natal care, though important, is to-day exalted at the expense of skilled attendance in labour, which is more important still.

Such undoubted truths should dispose of the futile and obnoxious pretence that motherhood can be safeguarded by the ante-natal examinations of medical practitioners, whose time is too valuable, or too highly priced, to permit of their attendance during the most critical period of labour and the puerperium.

The Departmental Committee actually proposes that the fee paid to the doctor for ante- and post-natal services shall not be increased if he attend the mother in labour, in order that he may not be encouraged to attend without need. To make such a provision—I write this with a great sense of responsibility—would be to cast a number of mother lives into the jaws of death!

The Committee elaborately discusses evidence from the medical and gynæcological professional bodies on the question of anæsthesia for the relief of pain and the safeguarding of mothers from childbirth shock, which, it must be remembered, causes death in some cases. Since all are agreed that the midwife may not and cannot administer anæsthetics, this discussion is fantastic and even grotesque as affecting the vast majority of the mothers of the nation, whom it is intended shall get through the birth and its pains, as best they may, with the inexpensive attendance of a midwife alone.

In 1928 there were no fewer than 27,580 still-births, a loss of 40 infants per 1,000 live births. Eardley Holland, as a result of 300 post-mortem examinations of still-born children, found that complications of labour were responsible for 51 per cent. of these still-birth deaths. Dr. Cruickshank found that amongst 806 infants who had died within twenty-eight days of birth 67.5 per cent. had perished from causes operating during the birth. For the saving of infants, therefore, as well as for the prevention of maternal deaths, labour is not an incident to be passed over as of small account: it is the supreme crisis of maternity, and requires all the skill, all the care and attention which modern science and the wealth of modern communities can provide.

No doubt there were experts in days gone by who advanced expert reasons why surgery should remain the province of the barber, as to-day the Departmental Committee desires to relegate labour to the midwife. The Committee asserts that 17.6 per cent. of the maternal deaths it reviewed were due to lack of efficient ante-natal care, and a further 17.4 per cent. to errors of judgment on the part of doctors and midwives. It insists that had sufficient information to form a judgment been supplied in the remaining cases these percentages must have been added to.

Nevertheless, in this age of specialization, the Committee turns its back on the possibility of establishing a specialist

service for midwifery. It places reliance instead upon an extension of the chaotic and overlapping services which have grown up tentatively here and there like patches upon an unseaworthy vessel.

In place of all these a genuine national maternity service should be established, free to all mothers, as the elementary schools are free to all children, and administered by the Ministry of Health and the health departments of the local authorities.

This service should retain a body of fully trained medical practitioners and of registered nurses holding the C.M.B. Certificate. The staff should be sufficient to provide a doctor and midwife for every birth; indeed, the presence of a doctor should be legally compulsory in all cases.

Dr. Moore (the Medical Officer for Health for Huddersfield, who established the notification of births in that city before Parliament made it compulsory for the country as a whole) has now established voluntary notification of pregnancy in Huddersfield. Under his scheme the woman whose pregnancy is notified, with her consent, by her doctor or her midwife, is visited and examined by a woman doctor from the Health Department and kept under constant ante-natal supervision. Fifty per cent. of Huddersfield pregnancies are thus notified and cared for; whilst the ante-natal clinics operating elsewhere rarely obtain even a single visit from 5 per cent. of the pregnant women of the district, a much smaller proportion of expectant mothers making all the attendances regarded as necessary.

The Huddersfield scheme, though it shows splendid results, having greatly reduced the rate of maternal deaths, has this weakness: the doctor of the Health Department is not present at the birth.

A full municipal midwifery service (which Dr. Moore also advocates) would ensure that the doctor responsible for ante-natal care would conduct also the delivery and would attend the mother during the puerperium.

This doctor would also examine and prescribe for the new-born infant, a most necessary precaution, which, in spite of the heavy neo-natal death-rate, the medical experts of the Departmental Committee have egregiously disregarded!

I must add that the municipal maternity nurse supplied under the better scheme here outlined would give constant attention upon the mother during the puerperium—not the daily flying visit at present given by midwives.

The medical ladies of the Departmental Committee could each and all of them demand the attendance of a fully qualified medical practitioner and the whole-time services of a maternity nurse holding the C.M.B. Certificate during their own, let us earnestly hope, entirely normal confinements.

May we not ask for working-class mothers the care which is necessary for doctors and Dames?—Yours, &c.,

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

SIR,—Mr. Meyrick Booth's attempt to account for the high maternal death-rate in your last issue is, I regret, unsuccessful, in that it is based on incorrect figures and on imaginary premises.

It is not true that the maternal death-rate in 1910 was 30 per cent. lower than it is to-day. The nearest comparable figures are given in the recent Report on Maternal Mortality; they show that whereas over the years 1911-15, the death-rate was 4.03 per thousand, for 1929 it was 4.33—a difference, not of 30 per cent., but of .3 per thousand. (The actual difference in the rate for 1910 and that for 1911-15 is negligible.)

Mr. Booth attributes the high maternal death-rate we still have, not, as does the Report, mainly to the lack of some aspects of medical care, but to what he calls the "masculinization" of women, which awkward and question-begging term he defines as "the attempt to base their whole education and occupation on masculine ideas and aims."

If this fantastic suggestion were either true or sufficient, how does he account for the following facts:—

1. That where medical care is adequate, as it is in certain institutions and under the care of certain large groups of midwives referred to in the Report, page 106, the death-rate falls to round about 1 per thousand and even less?

2. That in Italy—whose low maternal death-rate he

quotes with approbation—a far larger proportion of women—the wives of nearly all those living on the land—work at "masculine" occupations, than in this country?

Mr. Booth asks if I maintain that, twenty years ago, medical conditions were better than they are now? I am myself no medical expert, but a considerable body of evidence was laid before the recent Committee, which shows that though, during that period, obstetric science has progressed, the practical training of medical students in many of the schools has actually been reduced, owing to the fall in birth-rate and to the intensified competition for "material" on the part of women who wish to qualify, but not to practise as midwives.

The Report also bears witness to the growth of certain undesirable practices on the part of doctors, such as the increase of "meddlesome midwifery," owing to undue haste on the part of doctor or patient. Members of the medical profession are the first to point out the imperative necessity for an improvement both in their training and practice, if the much-needed reduction in the maternal death-rate is to be brought about.—Yours, &c.,

EVA M. HUBBACK.

19, Wellgarth Road, N.W.11.
September 8th, 1930.

SIR,—Because our rate of maternal mortality per 1,000 births has increased, are Mr. Meyrick Booth and almost everybody else right in assuming that childbirth in England has become riskier? Doubts are raised by at least one consideration. First confinements are far more dangerous than subsequent ones, and an increasing proportion of married women have been using contraception to beget only one child; thus an increasing proportion of the nation's confinements has been the especially dangerous ones. Women who have only one child increase the maternal mortality rate per 1,000 births, although they reduce their own risk of dying in childbirth. The foregoing consideration suggests that we should not assume that childbirth has become more dangerous until it be shown that the rate of maternal mortality per 1,000 mothers of child-bearing age has also risen.—Yours, &c.,

MEDICO.

September 6th, 1930.

SIR EDWARD GRIGG

SIR,—It is an amusing fact that whenever anyone raises his voice in favour of "native policy" in East Africa and against the "settlers' policy" of Lord Delamere and his party, some respectable person rises up in England and lectures him in approved schoolmasterly manner on being bitter, intemperate, and prejudiced. In nine cases out of ten his facts are very carefully ignored. When the settlers or Sir Edward Grigg state their case at immense length no respectable schoolmasterly person rises up and reads them a lesson on sweetness, temperance, and open-mindedness.

The Hon. R. H. Brand and Lord Lothian, in their joint letter, read me the usual lesson. Not a word about my facts! Yet practically every sentence in my article was a statement of fact. I stated the facts with regard to the constitutional position of Sir Edward Grigg as Governor of Kenya. Were they wrong? I stated the facts with regard to the two rival policies of development in Kenya and of Sir Edward Grigg's persistent identification of himself with one policy, which is not the official policy of the Colonial Office, of H.M.'s present Government, or of H.M.'s late Government. Were they wrong? I stated that Sir Edward Grigg, in order to discredit the Secretary of State's policy, in a public speech in the Kenya Legislative Council, gave an imaginary account of Sir Charles Eliot's resignation, and I gave the true account drawn from the Foreign Office papers of 1904 (cd. 2099 and 2100). Were these statements wrong? I did not state that Sir Edward Grigg had never on any occasion supported the interests of the natives against those of the whites, but I did state that I had never myself heard of such an occasion. Perhaps Mr. Brand and Lord Lothian can quote us one.

I have had as much experience of Colonial administration from the inside in Crown Colonies as either Mr. Brand

or Lord Lothian, and in my opinion the Service suffers not because Colonial Governors have too much, but because they have too little, outside criticism. And I protest against the idea that a criticism of Sir Edward Grigg's administration is a kind of *lèse-majesté*.

In one point only I admit that I laid myself open to a palpable hit, and Mr. Brand and Lord Lothian are good enough fencers quite rightly to give it me. I am and, to my own regret as much as to theirs, must unfortunately remain anonymously

YOUR CORRESPONDENT.

GOLD, THE ARBITER OF DESTINY

SIR,—Mr. D. M. Mason belongs to the select few who still adhere to the view that world monetary policy is satisfactory so long as currencies are convertible into gold at par—no matter how much the value of gold appreciates. His dictum that the disastrous fall in prices is "long overdue," though meaningless to anyone with a sense of realities, will please Sir Oswald Stoll and the peculiar-minded people who feel that they should always have the right to convert their claims upon the world's services into an unvarying weight of appreciating metal. What level of prices will satisfy these gentlemen? That of 1914? Hardly! Of 1896? Perhaps. But why should there be *any* end to the fall? Though the burden of debt increases in proportion as the capacity of industry to pay is reduced, though commodity prices fall far below the costs of production, though figures of bankruptcy and unemployment soar, the "economists of the City," the very same who were recently urging us all to produce more, either blame industry for "over-production," or assert that falling prices are "natural" owing to the increasing efficiency of industry—an efficiency which apparently cannot affect the costs of gold mining! As for Mr. Mason's contention that the fall in prices will "make gold mining more profitable"—implying that output will thereby be increased, Sir Henry Strakosch (who may be supposed to know more about the question than Mr. Mason) dealt with this argument in his memorandum, "Monetary Policy and the Gold Standard," published in the *ECONOMIST*, November 10th, 1928:—

"For technical reasons alone it is very unlikely that anything but a very pronounced fall in prices would have this effect, even if the whole benefit of such a fall were to accrue to the gold-mining industry. It is on the latter point that the suggestion breaks down completely. . . ."

Nor does the experience of the two long periods of falling gold prices during the nineteenth century support the theory that the output of gold can be stimulated. But, if it could be, it scarcely seems to be an economic method of checking a decline in prices.

Mr. Mason's announcement that the contraction of currency in 1920 was subsequent to the fall in prices is hardly new. Some day he may discover that expansion of currency also is consequent on rising prices. But this does not show, as he assumes, that contraction of credit, by relative shortage of gold, high interest rates, curtailed accommodation, or reduction of floating debt, has not invariably preceded any serious fall in prices.—Yours, &c.,

GEOFFREY BIDDULPH.

Seaway, Rottingdean.

ITALIAN FOREIGN POLICY

SIR,—Herr Karl Brunner, in his letter in your issue of the 6th inst., in reply to my previous one (issue of August 16th), asks me for instances of the persecution of Italians in the Trentino by the old Hapsburg Government. Let him visit the Castello del Buon Consiglio at Trento, where he will find abundant and grim records of that persecution. He quotes, as an instance of the old Austria's benevolence to her Italian subjects, the offer to open an Italian law faculty at Rovereto. But he omits to mention the Italian faculty opened at the University of Innsbruck, where distinguished professors were howled down and had

to fly, and students were brutally beaten simply because they were Italian. Herr Brunner refuses to include as instances of Austrian persecution, "cases against persons who wanted to break off this part of the country (the Trentino) from Austria, which, as the case was, meant high treason." This, I maintain, is the whole point. Such measures of severity as have been enforced by the Italian Government south of the Brenner were directed "against persons who wished to break off this part of the country" from Italy, "which means high treason." Had there been no definite attempts of this kind, conducted in most cases, not by natives of the district, but by persons from beyond the frontiers, some of them not even Austrian citizens, those measures would not have been necessary. To-day, when political Irredentism in the Alto Adige is greatly attenuated and good relations have, I am sincerely glad to see, been established between Italy and both Austria and Germany, there is every reason to hope that Italians and Germans within the frontiers of Italy will live side by side on friendly terms. Indeed, when I recently visited the province, I was struck by the cordiality which seemed to prevail between the two elements of the population, and which, I trust, will ever increase.

Herr Brunner speaks of the toleration shown by the new Austria to her non-German citizens, who, he maintains, "were not included in Austria by a wilful act of the Government" as the Germans and Slavs in Italy were. But he appears to be unaware that the Germans south of the Brenner and the Slavs of the Venezia Giulia were included in Italy, not by "a wilful act of the Government," but by an international treaty subscribed by eighteen Powers. Likewise, the Burgenland was transferred from Hungary to Austria as a result of international treaties. The only district in that province to which the plebiscite was applied was that of Sopron, and there the majority voted for Hungary; Austria protested that the voters had been terrorized and the voting lists manipulated, but the Council of Ambassadors recognized the decision.

We may commend Austria's treatment of her non-German citizens, but we should remember that she has legal obligations towards them in the shape of the minority clauses of the Treaty of St. Germain (articles 62 to 69).—Yours, etc.,

LUIGI VILLARI.

1, Chester Terrace, Regent's Park, N.W.1.
September 7, 1930.

A GROSS SCANDAL

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a letter in *THE NATION* headed "A Gross Scandal," and signed A. R. C.

It is important that the statements made at the Modern Churchmen's Conference should not be misunderstood, and with your permission I should like to say:—

That the operation for sterilization was carried out in the two cases mentioned, not only with the written consent, but at the express wish of the individuals concerned in each case. It was performed with the following objects in view:—

1. To prevent the probable birth of defective children. In the case of one couple the female partner comes from a defective family in which other members are blind or mentally deficient. One illegitimate child has already been born.

2. To help the blind partners to the marriage in both cases, by enabling them to obtain the solace and help of married life in their affliction, without incurring the burden of a family of children, whom they would be unable (from their blindness) to rear under decent conditions, and for whose support and upbringing the State would be responsible.

I should add that it is *not* true to say that the Committee insist on sterilization as a preliminary to marriage in certain cases under their care. The Committee wish to be assured before giving their consent in cases in which a family is not desirable, that such marriages will be childless.—Yours, &c.,

C. J. BOND.

Fernshaw, 10, Springfield Road, Leicester.
September 9th, 1930.

THE ECONOMIC RESULTS OF THE BLACK DEATH

SIR,—It is extremely doubtful whether Dr. C. V. Drysdale ought to rely upon the opinions of Thorold Rogers about the economic and political results of the Black Death, as he did so largely in his letter in your recent issue. Before legal records had been investigated, it was naturally assumed that the Government could not preserve the *status quo* by legislation after an event so enormous in its economic effects. I believe that I am right, however, in saying that no less than nine thousand cases, brought to the central courts between 1350 and 1370 under the Statute of Labourers, have been described by Miss Putnam in the historical publications of Columbia University. They were mostly cases of offences against the wages clause; the clause insisting upon reasonable prices for foodstuffs was obviously harder to enforce; but, when so many cases were tried at Westminster, it is safe to assume that many were settled locally. In face of evidence such as this it is impossible to speak of England being "in the grip of the Feudal System" before the Plague. The Plague did indeed accelerate the decay of the manorial system, but that had begun long before. The Statute of Labourers, passed in an emergency, must have alleviated its worst effects. If Dr. Drysdale still seeks an historical analogy, he may consider whether this legislation so far improved the lot of the villeins as to make possible the Revolt of 1381. He ought not at any rate to think that the villeins escaped governmental control in the fourteenth century more easily than we can that of the Trades Unions in the twentieth.—Yours, &c.,

STEPHEN D. USHERWOOD.

Aloe Cottage, Rock, N. Cornwall.

VAGRANCY

SIR,—As a Guardian I was interested to see in THE NATION of August 23rd the comment on the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Vagrancy Problem.

Local authorities should be compelled to co-operate and to assist Voluntary Training Centres. The type of young casual one gets on the road to-day is the man who is "down and out" through no fault of his own, and it is our job to reclaim these men before they get into the treadmill of the road; it can be done and is being done by men and women of courage who are willing to take the risk of one or two failures, and it is worth it if *only* one out of every three is saved from learning the tricks of the old roadster who is often a crook or a criminal and difficult to reform.—Yours, &c.,

MILDRED L. HEBDITCH.

The Close, Martock, Somerset.

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS

SIR,—After noticing the amazing change for the better in the treatment of animals in Italy since the commencement of the Mussolini regime, and the recent expansion in the activities of the Italian Society for the protection of animals, one cannot help wondering to what extent the decent treatment of animals is due to education and to what extent to natural feelings.

We, in England, have always regarded ourselves as vastly superior to the Latin races in this respect. Yet the humane slaughter of animals, which is obligatory in Italy in every slaughter-house, is not enforced in England. Vivisection, which is to be prescribed by law in Italy as from November next, is also tolerated by us.

Is it not possible that our (partial) superiority in this respect is due far more to the educational zeal of enthusiasts banded together into organisations such as the R.S.P.C.A., rather than to any particular inborn virtue?

Our past of bear-baiting, cock-fighting, bearing-reins, etc., and the recent change for the better in Italian treatment of dumb creatures, certainly lend weight to this theory.—Yours, etc.,

CECIL POWELL.

Anticoli-Corrado, Italy.
September 3rd, 1930.

THE NUT-CRACKING ELIZABETHANS

LIFE has always been streaked with minor ironies. It is curious to note how, time and again throughout the seventeenth century, the players, in their endeavours to propitiate and consolidate their public, had the misfortune to make rods for their own backs. Concessions acted like boomerangs quite unexpectedly, and not even the creature comforts of the audience could be attended to without some jarring rebound. When Paul Hentzner, the Brandenburg jurist, visited London in 1598 and went the round of the theatres, he was struck by the custom of hawking apples, pears, and nuts in the house while the audience was assembling. To that practice there does not seem at the first glance to be any possible objection, but, unfortunately, the Elizabethan playgoer of the commoner order got into a habit of persistent nut-cracking which proved a nuisance. True, it was not a neurotic age, and (to adapt Dr. Johnson's retort to Garrick), Punch was not expected to have any particular feelings; but, all the same, we have abundant testimony of the annoyance occasioned not only to the players but to concentrative playgoers by the nut-cracker. He became the symbol of those "barren spectators" for whom Hamlet expressed high contempt. Not that the habit was confined to men alone: both sexes indulged in it. In 1601, at a time when personal satire in play and poem was all the rage, Tucca, in Dekker's "Satiromastix," complained to Horace that "a gentleman or an honest citizen shall not sit in your pennie-bench theatres, with his squirrel by his side cracking nuts, nor sneake into a taverne with his mermaid, but he shall be satyr'd and epigramm'd upon, and his humour must run upo' th' stage."

Here, however, we have merely a plain statement of fact; it is not until a trifle over a decade later that a note of oburgation concerning the habit is sounded. Holding forth in defence of his companions, Young Loveless in Beaumont and Fletcher's "The Scornful Lady" says:—

" . . . These are no rav'ning footmen,
No fellows that at ordinaries dare eat
Their eighteenpence out before they rise,
And yet go hungry to a play, and crack
More nuts than would suffice a dozen squirrels:
Besides the din, which is most damnable.
I had rather rail, and be confined to a boat-maker
Than link among such rascals."

In another play of about the same period (1615), by the same authors, there is a similarly contemptuous allusion to nut-cracking. In "Wit Without Money," Valentine showers invective on the heads of his fickle friends, and bids them continue in their littleness and ignorance:—

"Till you break in at plays, like 'prentices
For three a groat, and crack nuts, with the scholars
In penny rooms again."

It is remarkable that on this point Ben Jonson, otherwise so vehement in the correction of abuses, should have remained so long silent, but, in 1625, he, too, had his innings. Listen to what he says in the court prologue to "The Staple of News":—

"A work not smelling of the lamp, to-night,
But fitted for your Majesty's disport,
And writ to the meridian of your Court,
We bring; and hope it may produce delight,
The rather being offered as a rite,
To scholars that can judge, and fair report
The sense they hear, above the vulgar sort
Of nut-crackers, that only come for sight."

Since Ben's comedy had been originally produced before the select audience of the Blackfriars, where it was

equivocally received, there is a hint here that the Jacobean gallant had acquired a playhouse habit that in earlier days had been confined to commoner folk. Later evidence turns suspicion into certainty. It comes from a dramatist of a certain curious type which Jonson and his class abominated.

With the view of gaining dramatic illustration of the old new cult of platonic love, Queen Henrietta, in Caroline days, encouraged sundry courtiers inflicted with the itch of writing (not to speak of a handful of aspiring young University men) to indite plays for the especial delectation and enlightenment of the Court circle. After these had been duly acted at Whitehall, it was the custom of this superior-minded brood of amateurs, in order that their plays might reach a wider public, to give them free, gratis, and for nothing to the players. They had no desire, however, to be classed with the Shirleys and the Bromes of the hour, and when their pieces were publicly presented, took care to warn the spectators they were not of that common sort of clay that wrote for pay. Thus, when Jasper Mayne's comedy, "The City Match," after having been heard at Court, was brought out at the Blackfriars in 1639, the author began his prologue, most impertinently, by telling the audience that the fortunes of his play were in nowise dependent upon their suffrages, it having been written at the behest of the King:—

"Yet he to the King's command needs the King's writ
To keep him safe, not to be arraign'd for wit.
Not that he fears his name can suffer wrack
From them who sixpence pay and sixpence crack.
To such he wrote not."

The reference here is to that "magistrate of wit," the stage stoolholder, who, after paying sixpence for his seat, evidently spent another sixpence in nuts. This latter disbursement, viewing the fact that money then had at least eight times its present purchasing power, points to vile profiteering (others, as well as the poor, are always with us), and indicates why the players so long tolerated the nuisance of nut-cracking. Profiteering, indeed, can be proved in a more satisfactory way. In his "Picturæ Loquentes," published in 1631, Wye Saltonstall has a character portrait of "A Lawyer's Clerke," in which he tells us that "at a new play he'll be sure to be seen in the threepenny room, and buyes his pippins before he goes in, because he can have more for money."

Perhaps the supreme compliment paid to Shakespeare in his own day lay in the fact that he was about the only dramatist whose characterizations compelled the nut-crackers to refrain for a time from their favourite pastime. Recall T. Palmer's lines in memory of John Fletcher:—

"I could praise Heywood now; or tell how long
Falstaff from cracking nuts hath kept the throng;
But for a Fletcher I must take an age."

Beyond Shakespeare's wizardry, nothing else seems to have been capable of arresting the operations of the nut-crackers until the Puritans closed the theatres. In his poem on "The Art of Longevity," published in 1659, but undoubtedly written about a score of years earlier, Gayton has a revealing pronouncement on this subject:—

"In Hazel-nut, or Filberd, cold and dry
Of temper, doth a windy moisture lye
Which yields but little nourishment, so rough
It will not pass the stomach soon enough,
But lies like a bullet, or small shot of lead,
Yet upon these the vulgar sort do feed,
And at the Playhouses, betwixt the Acts,
The Musick Room is drown'd with these nut-cracks."

With the Restoration, when the masses lost their way to the theatre, nuts and apples went out of favour and oranges came in. But the profiteering still went on. Cautious man as he was with money, Pepys had to give

sixpence apiece for his oranges. In nothing, perhaps, had the Interregnum occasioned such a sundering with the past as in theatrical routine and playgoing custom. With what lofty contempt the Restoration wits looked back upon the amusements of their forbears may be divined from the prologue to Corye's play, "The Generous Enemies," as delivered at the Theatre Royal in 1671:—

"I cannot chose but laugh when I look back and see
The strange vicissitudes of poetrie,
Your aged fathers came to plays for wit,
And sat knee-deep in nutshells in the pit;
Coarse hangings then, instead of scenes, were worn
And Kidderminster did the stage adorn."

The astonishing thing is that, notwithstanding this reflection and the matter-of-fact statements of Flecknoe and other of Corye's contemporaries to the same effect, the sturdy phalanx of sciolists still persist in averring that scenery was in regular use in some of the old theatres before the Puritan came into the ascendant.

W. J. LAWRENCE.

WATCHING LIPS MOVING

By STELLA BENSON.

EXCEPT for the movement of his lips, which was a soft uncalculable writhing, everything that the visitor did had an insistent and monotonous rhythm; his outlying muscles and bones moved with the regularity of a ticking clock—or, at best, with a slavishly syncopated beat. His foot fidgetted, almost soundlessly, against the floor in three-time—tap-tap-tap—twitch—tap-tap-tap—twitch—tap-tap-tap . . . as if he found some tune in his own speech that made his toe want to dance. For me, the rest of him seemed to out-shout the sounds that came from his lips. "What a complexity—what a complexity," I thought, as I watched his lips moving. Inside his bony skull, I knew, a thing like a grey bath-sponge was causing all this portentous agitation in the flesh of his face. His lips, tautened and puffed out, blowing modulated breath into the air—the very mosquitoes, hanging in front of his face, awaiting a stillness of his features that would give them their chance of a meal, were affected by the agitation caused by that secret grey bath-sponge shut up in the round box of bone at the top of our visitor's spine.

"What a complexity . . . how could one bear to hear his words, when even to see the lips engaged in their formation, involves such inconceivable elaborations." Our visitor's lips moved rather one-sidedly; his teeth, varnished with the saliva also stimulated by the agitation of that unseen grey bath-sponge, were much more seen on this side than on that. Two little muscles at the outer corners of his cheeks twitched to raise and lower his writhing lips, as the hands of modest ladies used to grasp and lift their petticoats when staid feet wanted to dance. This twitching of the cheeks slightly moved his horn-rimmed spectacles; the bridge between the discs bestrode his trembling nose like a rider mounted on a nervous horse. The moving glasses shimmered in the light of the sunset; little whorls and splinters of bloody sunset light were caught in the convex surface of each disc. At one moment, in each glass the tiny perfect sun rested in a tiny hammock of clouds—in the next moment, the twin pictures were broken as the glasses glanced up and aside; the eyes behind the glasses were caged behind glittering gold and crystal bars. Thus was our mild and sweating visitor connected with the far sun that gave him birth by a couple of attenuated umbilical cords of sunbeams. The sun flamed and screamed through

space; our visitor's lips and cheeks moved, blowing out various breaths into the air—and the combined result of these far-removed agitations was the tossing of two tiny quivering sunsets from facet to facet of the twitching discs before our visitor's eyes.

"I must listen," I thought. "This is interesting—all that he is saying must be interesting. It is something I want to know—about the Kuomintang. . . ." But nothing seemed interesting enough to deflect my enchanted attention from my eyes to my ears—to rival that astounding elaboration of flesh and nerve that caused his lips to move, that caused those little jointed bones of his toes to drum out the rhythm that, to his ears, seemed innate in the sounds his lips were wringing out. His lips moved almost as though he were eating—yet he was doing nothing so explicable and logical as eating. Instead of sucking in with those lips solid nourishment for his body, he was blowing out mere breath, by means of a subtle levering of bones and muscles; in the form of breath, he was sending out the results of the fortuitous convolutions of the bath-sponge inside his skull. The sounds he breathed dissolved into the dusky air—died immediately on the fickle drum of my ear, or lived for a few seconds as a dying illusory echo, just as a light, when withdrawn, stands for a short space on the screen of the eye's memory. All the sounds he so skilfully breathed faded—crumbled in ruins about him; only this core of flesh and bone that was his body remained in the midst of this dissolving edifice of sounds; only that unconsumed live coal, his body, was the residue of that quickly extinguished flame and smoke of significant breath.

Yet, immortal—abiding—as that body dwelt among the ruins, he himself had forgotten it. He had abandoned it to work alone, left it to cramp and slacken the minor bones of its extremities, the threadlike muscles and nerves in its flesh. His forgotten stomach received and disposed of the dinner we had given him; his lonely toe tapped the ground unprompted; his Adam's-apple sprang about above his spotted tie. His body, deserted, maintained its rights of movement, as the roots of a plant press through and grip the soil, regardless of the wind that blows seeds broadcast, contemptuously unaware of the bee's rough comings and goings.

Our visitor was outside himself—outside his solid self; all his consciousness was a daredevil steeplejack, climbing the invisible rungs of that scaffolding of words which ethereally enclosed that body which he had abandoned to the mercy of my astounded eyes. For a moment I almost saw the bars of words that he had raised about himself. "A prisoner in a cage of complexity," I thought. "For after all, there is nothing here, really, except his body. If I were to listen, the sounds that his variously stopped breaths are making would reach the drum of my ear, and I should share the delusion that something was being built between us—a bridge from his lips to my ears. But really—there is no bridge; his bath-sponge of a brain is ten feet away from my bath-sponge; nothing but air (supporting at this moment three mosquitoes and a white moth) is really between us at all. Nothing is outside of our bodies except breath, and breath, even though it carries words, is nothing but waste air from our buried lungs that expand and contract within our ribs. Yet I must listen to him—I must begin to listen to him, or he will be finished—and I shall never be able to recapture the sounds he is blowing into the air between us. Perhaps for lack of that knowledge about the China I live in, my body some day may suffer. Yet—what is knowledge?

Alteration of the convolutions of the bath-sponge in one's skull? How can this fleshy brain of mine—so impenetrably isolated—catch the infection of knowledge across that space of sterile air? Can any actual tangible addition to my body's assets travel across a bridge of broken air, from his bone skull to mine? There is nothing here—there is nothing here—except the visitor, and me, and a few listeners . . . a group of mammals suffering from some convulsive affliction—some tic of the extremities that makes us wobble our flesh, mouth these sounds, before one another's eyes, and in one another's ears. Ah, what a complexity—what a toppling air-drawn superstructure of illusion is built upon these quiet foundations, our bodies. . . "

My watch upon our visitor was interrupted by a slight sound at my feet. My puppy, asleep on the floor, was dreaming, the pads of its clumsy paws spreading and contracting—spreading and contracting—in the stress of some desperate dream hurry. A little captive twittering could be heard from inside the puppy's nose; the golden fur of its cheeks was blown out and sucked in. In its dream, evidently, the puppy was creating a great stir, the noise of its own important voice gloriously filled its drowned ears—though no sound but that innocent treble nickering overflowed the bounds of the dream to overwhelm us. Yet, though my ears were stopped by my dull waking state, some hint of the puppy's dream seemed to escape with its ignominious muted voice into the air. To try to follow that clue, to try to enter the dream, was like wading into some thick, warm, twilight element—like sinking in a sea that swirled with the agitations of half-seen shapes—fragmentary creatures that were materialized out of nothing more solid than the puppy's few weeks of idiot experience. Even before the puppy's waking eyes, I, and the sun on the grass, and manure heaps, and cockroaches, and bicycles, and carpet-slippers, and soldiers, and cows, were marshalled in the form of more or less dangerous, more or less gnawable, more or less smelly monsters—monsters that had no meaning and acknowledged no standard or precedent. The puppy would never divine, in me or in a passing cow, the charted existence of those bones that upheld the incalculable ghosts—two-legged or four-legged—that towered and tottered before its waking eyes. Those bones would remain for ever unsuspected and ungnawable, in a waking world lighted by the hope of a bone to gnaw.

And now, in the suffocated air of this galloping dream, even these formless creations were disintegrated, pulverized by sleep. Its understanding shrank from the new-born to the abortive. Waking, it saw men as trees walking; sleeping, forests galloped over it. The muscles of its paws strained in vain; it cried for help out of an uncreated world.

"Now," said our visitor, "you know all that I know about the intentions of the Kuomintang."

The ceasing of his talk woke the puppy—rescued it from its dream. It belched, yawned, and began to lick its left paw. I looked from the puppy to our visitor with compassion and amazement. The bath-sponge in his skull had been wrung dry to no purpose whatever. There was nothing new or changed in the air—yet he felt that virtue had gone out of him.

It seemed to me that we were cities of quiet houses, wrapped in eternal fog—a fog of sighs and cries and futile sounds and hopes and nightmares. We ourselves, like all over-elaborate cities, give rise to this fog; it is composed of the dead smoke from this fuel we have burned in our skulls. Cities of quiet abandoned houses drowned in fog—each house with a ghost in the attic.

FOUR NEW POEMS

THE GUEST

THE lamp burns in the kitchen. I have
Shut this narrow door. It is cold out there—
Will she bid me good-night, I wonder,
When she climbs abed, up the half-lit stair!

To-night the harvest moon is yellow as
Honey: the trees lean secret and still, smudged black.
She has hair like them; I watched her to-day
Bending and laughing near the pale straw stack.

All summer I've worked at old known things—
My God, what is it you have done to me?
Or is it perhaps—just her being here,
That I cannot find what I used to be?

N. LUCAS.

WRONG THREE TIMES

FROM Dilmun, Magan, and Meluhna
with gold and copper and dates,
the iron-beaked galleys crinkle,
gay with their bluer freights.
Across the silver ripples of
the Gulf that is a sea,
proud and glassy models of a doll's
house shut to me.
Multiplication is vexation,
smooth mechanism vain,
and bad for you is Timbuctoo,
and Espagnol, that's Spain.
On one side of us is a wall
of iron and bowler hats,
and on the other cotton wool
and pretty syrup vats.
Is it to be the bitter hiss
of engines and despair,
or the soupy saint of sentiment,
with roses in her hair?
The narrow path of misery
is eighty times more dear,
where all the saints are hissing,
and the engines halos wear.

PENNETHORNE HUGHES.

THE STORK AT DINKELSBÜHL

By the fountain we paused; high above us towered
The tall thin windows of the choir, and the fair Church
Rose up light, yet enormous. Near it stood
A great house to which we raised our eyes,
And there on the topmost roof on a platform were piled
Sticks, and in the midst of them standing the Stork,
His wife's head just visible beside him. The wind
Ruffled his breast-feathers, he stood comical and serene
Hundreds of feet above the coloured streets
And doll's house gables of clustered Dinkelsbühl,
A town of sweet-voiced bells and shining waters,
A town we visited on Sunday morning,
Sunday of tranquil air, long blue hours,
Chimes ringing and little children going to Church.
Outside the Church sits old Christoph von Schmid,
In bronze, famous teller of tales for children;
But the Stork made us think of somebody else,
An even more famous teller of tales for children,
Hans Christian of Denmark; we had thought that
Dinkelsbühl

Was certainly a place in one of his stories,
And when we saw the Stork, we felt sure of it. . . .

WILFRED CHILDE.

SAMOIS

At Samois lilies float
With dense white cups on green
Loose mats of leaves between,
That stroke the gliding boat;

In the light August showers
The washerwomen bend
Over the bank, and send
Ripples to rock the flowers;

To Samois, by the Seine,
In mind I often stray,
And watch the lilies sway
In summer showers again,

And mark how clear the stain
Where melancholy's been
Is printed on a scene
Of lily cups and rain.

JOHN LEHMANN.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Charlot's Masquerade," Cambridge Theatre.

THE interior of the new Cambridge Theatre is a remarkable improvement on the other recently built or renovated London theatres. It puts you in an excellent temper for "Charlot's Masquerade." The show contains several brilliant sketches by Mr. Ronald Jeans, and it contains Miss Beatrice Lillie. As long as she is on the stage, you are happy. Here are all the old delightful gaucheries, and also a new subtlety in a rich parody of Miss Ruth Draper. Then there is Miss Florence Desmond with a marvellous imitation of Miss Bankhead, and there is Dolin who performs very elegantly a *pas seul*. But the ballets are dreary and elaborate and hopelessly old-fashioned—"Snowdrop and the Seven Brothers" is as pointless as anything I have seen on the stage since the War. Moreover, the music of the Revue is just dull, and the night I was there Miss Constance Carpenter sang it just badly. And a sketch called "He Dines Alone" is painfully embarrassing. So that one left the show wondering why so much money and energy should have been dissipated with such uneven results. Is there no method of getting theatrical managers into touch with English artists comparable to the men employed by Diaghileff? And would not the public enjoy, just as a change, some satire that was really caustic? A country which contains Lord Rothermere, Sir John Reith, Mr. James Douglas, the Royal Academy, and the Lambeth Conference surely deserves a Revue with some salt in it.

"Richard III," New Theatre.

There are so many good things about this production that if Shakespeare can survive for long nowadays anywhere in the West End, which is doubtful in view of his recent pitiful failures to do so, then a new lease of life must have begun for him in St. Martin's Lane. It is difficult to imagine, for a start, that those who have seen Mr. Baliol Holloway once as Richard could fail to want to see him again, so as to relish the subtleties of his performance with closer attention. The subtleties are never slurred; he takes every opportunity Shakespeare provided, and his few liberties are delicious. And there are other things to tip the balance in favour of at least two visits—Mr. Alan Napier's King Edward IV, for instance, and the little Princes of Masters Harold Reese and Roger Foster, who take their places in the cast admirably, and who not only know perfectly what to do but do it well. Nothing is glaringly bad about the production, which is remarkable considering the size of the cast and the variety of scenes. There are one or two minor troubles. Mr. Gerald Lawrence is badly cast as Buckingham, and neither Miss Madge Compton nor Miss Doris Paul has quite enough voice to use when necessary. Cuts tend to make some of the

intricacies unintelligible, but on the whole they are inoffensive. The costumes are satisfactory without being fastidiously accurate or distractingly artistic. The scenery is adequate, if rather ordinary, and the scene-changing is commendably swift and silent. Success ought to bless this venture for many reasons, and particularly because it is *not* an example of that usual Shakespearean (and other) absurdity—a stage with one star outshining a host of very minor constellations.

"The Devil's Disciple," Savoy Theatre.

It must be an extremely ticklish business deciding how to tackle this melodrama-with-sense of Mr. Shaw's. All the time it hovers so dangerously on the brink of the Adelphi precipice; yet one knows that it can never topple over, for the heroics are backed by sound psychology. Dick Dudgeon, the picturesque ne'er-do-well, cannot explain his heroic conduct, except to say that he had no reason at all—it was sheer idiotic impulse. And what on earth is the romantic actor-manager to make of that? I find it very hard to say what I should have thought of Sir John Martin-Harvey's performance if I had had no previous knowledge of the play. He seemed to me to be over-acting like fury, but all the time one wondered whether he was not right to do so, in view of the climax that was coming. Most of his company also over-act, and with less justification; and all but two of them shout. Mr. Charles Carson, in the joyous part of General Burgoyne, was a fish out of water, unimbued with the Sydney Carton spirit, and altogether too quiet and subtle for his colleagues. A not very satisfactory production of a difficult play that should probably be read rather than acted, just as when it was written it should have been acted (but was not) rather than read.

"Eldorado," at Daly's.

A musical comedy may have every ingredient of success and yet be so poorly mixed as to make a very stodgy entertainment. "Eldorado" could in sober truth be praised for its tuneful music, its attractive setting, the individual successes of its actors, the excellence of its chorus. No critic would have perjured himself except negatively if he withheld the information that he had spent a dull and uninspired evening. To attach the blame to any of the many collaborators responsible for the whole or to any of the actors, all of whom did their best within the limits of their chances, would be unfair. Perhaps the failure lay in the lack of some dominant personality, sufficiently persuasive to make a rambling story about a coveted diamond or a conventional love affair thwarted by a family vendetta in any way credible. Miss Desiree Ellinger sings prettily and has some pretty things to sing, but seems too frail to bear the brunt of so cumbersome a plot. She has excellent support from Mr. Donald Mather. Mr. Jerry Verno, the principal comedian, works very hard, but his material, except in one instance, is not first rate. The brightest performances are among the second strings—Mr. Mark Daly, who is consistently funny in a study of feigned intoxication; Miss Mimi Crawford, who capers with much grace; and Miss Mai Bacon, who suggests that Miss Violet Lorraine might have returned to the stage in a moment of holiday. Mr. Oscar Asche makes one or two Falstaffian appearances which are of no account. We are used nowadays to a high level of chorus work, but the young ladies and gentlemen at Daly's both sing and dance with exceptional talent.

"The House of Pretence," Embassy Theatre.

For once the players are more important than the play. The company which Messrs. Alec Rea and A. R. Whatmore have assembled at the Embassy, which is to be run as a permanent repertory or short-run theatre, is not likely to let us down. Miss Edith Sharpe, who plays the chief part in the first production, is an actress of charm, intelligence, and youth; Miss Josephine Middleton has already displayed her prowess in character work at the Gate Theatre; and the other ladies seem capable enough, as far as one can judge from a single performance. There happen to be only two men's parts in this play, but both are adequately played, and in one of them Mr. Francis L. Sullivan shows a

particularly nice sense of character, not to mention a perfect French accent, which should be useful. Mr. Whatmore, the producer, seems to have the right ideas, and manages some rather intricate movements with much adroitness. As for the play, one must acknowledge its serious intent, and be grateful; but the author, Mr. Roy Jordan, cannot quite keep pace with it, and he uses what is practically an episodic form where visible and audible "action" are demanded. For the action lies almost entirely in the development of character; and we see the process too much in fits and starts. Neither are we convinced by the sinister effect of this home-from-home boarding-house on its inmates; the boarding-house has character enough, but there is no adequate explanation of its power to hold; more than half those unfortunate spinsters could so easily have left if they chose. The last act is more successful, but it is surely the last act of some other play, possibly written by Henry Arthur Jones!

Exhibition of Mechanical Aids to Learning.

This exhibition, organized by the British Institute of Adult Education, is the first of its kind, and may easily be of value. As the writer of the foreword to the catalogue points out, "Nothing is to be gained by deploring the fact that to-day the Machine is being pressed into—or rather, is offering itself to—the service of Knowledge." But it would be just as ridiculous to suggest that machines are an un-mixed blessing; that mechanical aids to learning, any more than to amusement, have no limitations; or that their limitations should not constantly be kept in view. Films, gramophones, and the radio will always beget the acquiring of snippets of unrelated information—and diversion; but as aids to learning, and allowing for the flies in the ointment (e.g., the more mechanical, the less individual; the more passive, the less receptive) they can do nothing but good. Many firms entered into the spirit of the exhibition well. Mr. Will Day lent a remarkable collection of objects illustrating the evolution of the film, and there were demonstrations of television, and a series of lectures.

* * *

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, September 13th.—

"Henry IV," Part 1, at the Old Vic, 7.45.

First Race for America Cup.

Mavis Bennett and Franklyn Kelsey, Promenade Concert, 8.

Dr. G. M. Lees, on "A Geologist in Arabia," Wireless, 9.55.

Sunday, September 14th.—

Mr. John A. Hobson, on "God and Mammon," South Place, 11.

Production by the J. T. Green Cosmopolitan Theatre of "L'Ecole des Cocottes," at the Arts.

Film—"Young Woodley," at the Capitol.

Monday, September 15th.—

Mr. Ben Levy's Comedy, "Art and Mrs. Bottle," at Wimbledon.

"Give a Dog —," by Mr. Lennox Robinson, at the Embassy.

"A Night Like This," at the Aldwych.

Mr. Desmond MacCarthy, on "New Books," Wireless, 7.

Tuesday, September 16th.—

Revival of "The Honeymoon," by Mr. Arnold Bennett, at the Everyman.

Wednesday, September 17th.—

Musical Play, "Follow a Star," at the Winter Garden Theatre.

Building Show, Olympia (September 17th-October 1st).

Thursday, September 18th.—

"Sexton Blake," at the Prince Edward Theatre.

"The Week in Geneva" (relayed from Geneva), Wireless, 10 p.m.

Friday, September 19th.—

Radio Show, Olympia New Hall (September 19th-27th).
Rose Show, Horticultural Hall.

OMICRON.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

MR. MURRY EDITS KEATS

FEW poets have been more cleverly and patiently edited than Keats. After Buxton Forman's "Complete" edition, and that issued by him at a later date through the Oxford University Press, supplemented by the several times improved edition by Professor de Séincourt with its luxuriance of annotation, one might have imagined that little was left to be done for this poet except on the reader's part. However, fresh manuscripts and case-altering information still come to light occasionally; and, with regard to former sources, it may be reasoned that not even a Buxton Forman's pertinacious skill could have made a faultless examination of them. Keats's handwriting, with its loose grace, its sense of power, is often liable to ambiguities; he penned and corrected rapidly, and for his own eye, sometimes in strange spelling which served for the moment to capture his meaning. Such considerations are strengthened by the recent *TIMES* discussion of what Keats actually wrote and meant in the most frequently repeated of all his verses, and by letters now and then appearing on other textual problems. So, actually, the devotee of Keats has been expectantly awaiting two editions which were proclaimed as improvements on those we know already. One of the reformations, Professor Walter Peck's, is still awaited. The other is ready: "The Poems and Verses of John Keats, edited and arranged in chronological order by John Middleton Murry" (The King's Printers, 2 vols., £3 10s.).

Mr. Murry's brief preface begins: "The aim of this edition of Keats's poems is to present them in chronological order. Some fifteen years ago Sir Sidney Colvin thus arranged the poems; but the time is ripe for a new, and as far as may be definitive, edition of Keats's poems in order of time." Mr. Murry confronts the criticism that his arrangement means a gallimaufry of high poetry and "casual or flippant verses" with the statement, "Beyond and through the poet I seek the man." There are objections to his theory that Keats can be best realized through his system, for it is a system impossible to reduce to absolute accuracy; nor, perhaps, is it everybody's choice to view poetry biographically. But Mr. Murry has set Keats's best and worst out, as far as he could, according to the almanack. The next question is, what text he offers. He replies, "I have conceived it to be my duty to make a fresh collation of the text" with Keats's original volumes, and with MSS. at the British Museum or in Lord Crewe's collection. He does not say what text in general he selects, nor usually the authority for the individual poems. In spite of the psychological interest, he gives almost no variant readings; although he prints two versions of a poem (such as "La Belle Dame") here and there. One asks further, what the contents amount to; the answer is, "All the known poems of Keats." There are notes, intended "to illuminate the poems by the letters."

So much for outlines. The task of dating the poems with reasonable correctness is one in which a modern editor is greatly helped by Keats himself and by his friendly transcribers, especially Woodhouse. The first real problem remaining is the date of "To Solitude," Keats's first published poem. Mr. Murry suggests November, 1815, rather than the following spring. The sonnet to Haydon, "Great Spirits," seems to be dated by Keats's letter of November 20th, 1816, sending it. Mr. Murry omits the "20." The ascription of "In a drear-nighted December" to December, 1817, is stated to be Woodhouse's, but Buxton Forman quotes Woodhouse as assigning the piece to "about October or December, 1818." From a transcript by Charles Brown, Mr. Murry is able to place a form of the "Bright Star" sonnet with the poems of 1819, and other evidence gives him the probable month, April. When we come to the great Odes, "the order is purely conjectural," except for

"To Psyche" and "To Autumn." For "The Fall of Hyperion," the date established by Colvin is accepted (August-September, 1819); in fact, Charles Brown had given little room for error. Mr. Murry's last date is unfortunate: "The End, February 21st, 1820, Rome."

As for the text of the poems, Mr. Murry perplexes his reader, for he does not define in many instances the source chosen. He certainly informs us once in the preface and once in the notes that he prints for the first time, from Woodhouse's transcript, the four concluding lines of the "Epistle to Reynolds." The reason why they were left unpublished till now was apparently that they were the transition to a prose passage. What one looked for not less eagerly was a verdict on lines 74-76, which have stood thus:—

"Oh, never will the prize,
High reason, and the love of good and ill,
Be my award!"

A correspondent in the *TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT* some time since pointed out that this was not sense, and proposed "lore" for "love"—which seems right, and was welcomed by Colvin. Mr. Murry, reprinting "love," has put right a few points of the kind elsewhere. But we are still in the dark over certain issues. Who punctuated the last lines of the "Grecian Urn"? Mr. Murry without comment sticks to the usual inverted commas which most opinions find misplaced, and suggesting a false interpretation of Keats's meaning. From photographs of Lord Crewe's MS. of the "Nightingale," one notices a reading or two that Colvin missed in his article on it. The nightingale avoids the pleonasm of the printed text; "pouring forth the soul abroad" stands "pouring thus thy soul abroad." A change of sense is felt in the lines as written and punctuated,

"Still would thou sing and I have ear in vain
To [?] thy high requiem, become a sod";

and seemingly "the fancy cannot cheat so well As she is fain'd to do" rather than "fam'd to do." Mr. Murry's collation of this MS. results in no departure from the text edited by John Taylor in 1820, and no allusion to Keats's written word.

Where Mr. Murry indicates the origin of a text, he is liable to obscure his original in the reprint. Thus, he tells us that the revised version of "La belle Dame sans merci" was published in the *INDICATOR* of May 10th, 1820; and yet his reprint departs from the *INDICATOR* text even in the title ("La Belle Dame sans Mercy"). It has eight other discrepancies—very little ones, indeed, but out of place in a new edition of Keats. Keats also contributed to the *INDICATOR* "A Dream, after Reading Dante's Episode of Paolo and Francesca." He had copied it earlier in a letter to George and Georgiana Keats. Mr. Murry's text is neither the one nor the other; it is mainly a matter of punctuation, no doubt, but, again, this was the wrong place for slovenliness in that respect. For example: Keats wrote, and printed, the third and fourth lines thus:—

"So on a Delphic reed my idle spright
So played, so charm'd, so conquer'd, so bereft. . . ."

By inserting commas before "my" and after "spright" Mr. Murry deprives the sentence of a subject.

The contents of these finely printed volumes, apart from the mass of variants omitted, include more of Keats's poems than any previous edition; Mr. Murry has gathered in the trivialities which Miss Amy Lowell was the first to print in her biography of Keats. Neither he nor she can be blamed; Keats wrote them; they are "not mark'd if present, nor if absent miss'd."

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

REVIEWS

DREAMS AND REALITIES

The Problem of the Twentieth Century. By DAVID DAVIES.
(Benn. 21s.)

THIS is a difficult book for a reviewer with a conscience and a belief in internationalism to review conscientiously. On every side its merits are obscured by its defects and then again its defects atoned for by merits. Its subject is international sanctions, one of the most difficult of subjects to write about intelligently and readably. Mr. Davies is a fanatic, his fanatical bee being the immediate establishment of an international police force. On this subject he has written a book of 795 large pages, containing probably between 200,000 and 300,000 words. The mere idea of reading over 200,000 words on the subject of an international police force must be nightmarish to the conscientious reviewer. This particular dream having unfortunately in our case become a reality, we have the right to record the fact that our forebodings were justified, and that there is no earthly reason why anyone should write a book of 795 pages about international sanctions. Mr. Davies's book would have been twice as good if it had been a half its length and possibly four times as good if it had been a quarter its length, though it would not have been eight times as good, had it been one-eighth its length. He repeats himself inordinately; much of what he says was not worth saying, and what was worth saying could have been said adequately in 200 or 300 pages.

But it is fairer to begin with Mr. Davies's merits and come back later to the defects. In the first place his is a courageous and honest book. He faces squarely the difficult problem of the use, organization, and control of force in the world of nations. Up to a point, he sees the present situation and the problem quite clearly. It is of the highest importance that the question should be thus stated and discussed. Mr. Davies brings to his task not only enthusiasm but wide study, and hidden in his vast volume of words is much valuable information. His argument, too—again, it must be added, up to a point—is unanswerable. Like most other people who have studied the history of nationalism and internationalism during the last thirty years, he believes that another "World War" would almost certainly destroy civilization, and that the only way to avoid barbarism is to establish a system of law and order in the relations between States analogous to the system established within States in the relations between individuals and associations of individuals. The problem then immediately arises: What in this new international system is to be done with force? Are we merely to superimpose upon the anarchical world of sovereign, independent States a League of Nations with its formulæ for the pacific settlement of international disputes and a slowly developing corpus of international law, Security Pacts, academic promises of disarmament, and an occasional melancholy, half-hearted treaty for the reduction of armaments, while we leave in the hands of individual nations these immense concentrations of force, the armies and navies? What should we think of a State which, after abolishing its police force, passed a law which pronounced burglary illegal and required all burglars to make a solemn renouncement of burglary, but recommended that all ex-burglars should after nightfall carry a jemmy, revolver, and life-preserver for their own protection?

Mr. Davies argues that if war is to be abolished and a system of law and order substituted for anarchy in international affairs, then nations must agree upon a system of international sanctions, by which force is placed behind international law and the successful use of it by an individual State for purposes of aggression is made highly improbable. The solution of the problem which he urges is the creation of an international force in the hands of the international authority or executive which would be overwhelmingly superior to the army, navy, and air force of any individual State. He works out an interesting and ingenious plan of his own, under which a certain quota of men and the more obsolete type of weapons would be left in the hands of States for the purposes of internal policing, while the international police force would be armed with all the most

modern and destructive weapons, *e.g.*, gas, tanks, airplanes, and submarines.

There is, as we have said, a great deal of merit in all this. Where Mr. Davies goes wrong is in losing his sense of proportion so that he does not seem able to distinguish between dreams and realities. By this we do not mean to bring against him the charge of utopianism always brought against proposals for radical reform. It is arguable that unless the international system develops on some such lines as those indicated by Mr. Davies—and that in the near future—it will be overwhelmed by another war which will really destroy Western civilization. But Mr. Davies has so innocent and exaggerated an idea of the efficacy of an international police force that it puts his whole view of the problem out of proportion; so that in the end he appears to be writing not about realities but about dreams.

He argues as if justice will begin to reign, international law be established, and statesmen and peoples think internationally and pacifically instead of nationally and belligerently immediately upon the establishment of an international police force, and at the same time as if, with things and feelings and national psychology what they are, statesmen and people can be persuaded forthwith to establish the international police force. To argue like this is to mistake the cart for the horse, the means for the end, the effect for the cause, and the dream for the reality. He sees that it is a wrong national and international psychology about international law and order and security which have made all attempts at disarmament or even reduction of armaments hitherto a failure. Yet he does not seem to see that it is infinitely less probable that people who think like Mussolini, Poincaré, and Mr. Churchill, and nations which are content to have their affairs managed by these "statesmen," will agree to hand over their tanks, battleships, and aeroplanes to an international authority established in Palestine than that they will agree to partial measures of disarmament. If our civilization is to continue, it will probably some day have to have an international authority and sanctions of the kind advocated by Mr. Davies; but the world will have to work through a stage of partial internationalism, partial disarmament, and partial international sanctions before there is any chance of its adopting Mr. Davies's full-blooded scheme.

LEONARD WOOLF.

BOOKS OUT OF IRELAND

Edward Martyn and the Irish Revival. By DENIS GWYNN.
(Cape. 12s. 6d.)

To Return to All That. By ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)

Two Years. By LIAM O'FLAHERTY. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)

IT is perhaps a mercy that the career of Edward Martyn has not fallen to the lot of one of our brightest biographers, for, as readers of Irish reminiscences will remember, all that could be done for him in that line was done while he yet lived. The absurdities of "dear Edward" have been delicately exhibited by Mr. George Moore, but, as Mr. Gwynn justly maintains, there was a good deal more to this powerful eccentric than his squalid quarters, his tin candelabra, his glass of grog, his Palestrina score, his churchwarden pipe, and his colds in the head. The ironic antitheses of his life are sufficiently obvious. Here is a man who, born a rich Irish landowner, lived to be President of Sinn Féin, and directed that at his death his body should be dissected in a Dublin hospital and buried in a pauper's grave. He hated women, and mortified his flesh in a stone cell in his Galway castle, and yet he fought a ludicrous *cause célèbre* to prevent his expulsion from an aristocratic club because it was the only place in Dublin where he could get caviare. Isolated from his fellows by the proud and unbending mediævalism of his religious faith, and totally unfitted for public life, his mark is to be found behind the more spectacular successes in almost every phase—literary, dramatic, musical, political—of the Irish revival. Martyn was a queer enough fellow, but he had three things of which the Ireland of his period stood in need: a long purse, a love of his country, and a fine artistic sensibility. These curious facts are, however, only the groundwork of Mr. Gwynn's biography. He resists all

temptations to embroider what Martyn was, in order to set out a plain tale of what he did, and with this object in view he draws to an unusual extent on Martyn's critical and controversial writings. The result is a narrative which is saturated with the uncompromising austerity and censoriousness of its subject's character. Edward Martyn always knew precisely what he wanted, he was usually in a position to get it, and in artistic matters he used his money and his influence with shrewd judgment. He held arrogantly on his way against the confused tides of what he called "Handy-Andy-ism," but it was an increasingly lonely way, and nothing is more moving in Mr. Gwynn's account than the contrast between the beneficence of his public work and the unhappy angers and isolations of his later life. It was inevitable that the achievements of one so lacking in flexibility and toleration should be obscured behind personalities of a mere popular talent. In taking up the cudgels for him, Mr. Gwynne has incidentally added to the history and subtracted from the romance of the Irish cultural movement; and between Mr. George Moore and Mr. Gwynn the truth about "dear Edward" is now out.

Mr. A. P. Graves, looking back anecdotally over the same period with an eye almost Shavian in its snappy alertness, has produced an amusing book which is very much of a family affair. He has, he asks us to remember, a son who said good-bye to all that at thirty. He himself, with a fine record of longevity at his back, wonders whether the early eighties are not too tender an age for anecdote. We are glad he took no further risks of postponement when he begins as beautifully as this:—

"My earliest recollection is falling at the age of one and a half with the back of my head on the bars of the nursery fire, and being dragged out of the fireplace by my brave little sister Helen, aged three."

The earlier chapters, with their clear and unforced cameos of a Limerick childhood, are perfect in their shining freshness, and Mr. Graves maintains throughout a creditable density of good jokes per square inch of print. The difficulty with the purely anecdotal manner is that the reader's appetite grows more finicky by what it feeds on, and the writer tends to fall into the mechanical brightness of the *disneur*. Fortunately Mr. Graves dishes up some solid fare just as the sweetmeats seem to be giving out. He became an Inspector of Schools, and has some interesting chapters on the methods and management of the School Board of forty years ago.

His literary work led him into contact with prophets and bards. One glimpse is of Swinburne bending ecstatically on Putney Heath over young Robert Graves's perambulator. Robert ultimately gets a chapter to himself, and people who did not relish his manner of "ticking off" the years of his youth will be interested to learn that his father is inclined to agree with them.

Mr. O'Flaherty looks like a dark product of the Irish revival, but it would be rash to harness his cyclonic power to a literary movement. His work inspires a violent meteorological metaphor. Most writers, even "powerful" ones, command some halcyon intervals, but with Mr. O'Flaherty it is all storm. Tossed from the Aran Islands into the war, he broods, at the beginning of this book, over the reeling London crowds of November 11th, 1918. Thence the tempests of his spirit blew him across to Rio, back to Smyrna, and again to the United States and Canada. It is Mr. O'Flaherty's distinction, and perhaps the secret of his power of exposing primitive emotion, that he runs unashamedly before the wind. This book is full of things which it is now the fashion to mention, but either as a dangerous lark or in a spirit of pseudo-scientific inquiry. Mr. O'Flaherty mentions them because having abandoned himself to them, he must. "Mention" is indeed too genteel a word. Scallywags and whores and pimps, panders and beachcombers and merely drunks—Mr. O'Flaherty flings himself upon them all, and on them he hangs some astonishing sermons. But his opinions on American civilization, the machine age, and the reality of God are not as important as the smash of his contacts with down-and-outs. These two years of his life were lived before he began to write. His employers (numbering about a score in this period) must have found him tiresome because he was always apt, as when working in a hotel, to dash his tray

in the head waiter's face and bolt. But he was serving an apprenticeship to a curious craft, whose naked products are seen in "The Black Soul" and "The Informer." In spite of delirium tremens at Smyrna, and bitter riots and rebellions in three continents, this tumultuous record is fiercely innocent.

BARRINGTON GATES.

A VICTORIAN PEEPSHOW

As We Were: Memories of E. F. Benson. (Longmans, 18s.)

IN one of those diaries in which the late Arthur Christopher Benson indulged his moods of self-depreciation he accused himself of being a purveyor of "chatty articles for maiden aunts." He also deplored the limited range of his social experience, for the eminence of his father had naturally provided a purple playground for himself and his brothers. Mr. E. F. Benson, the survivor of a distinguished trio, talking of the attitude of the great Victorians to the poverty and misery of the submerged classes, says, even of the Queen herself, that it was purely negative. It was not so much that they were unaware of the existence of brutal conditions; they simply ignored them. Beyond a respectable bourgeoisie, gradually gaining in riches and authority, the regal eye, and the eyes of the elect, saw no further. Poverty must be clean and deserving if it was to be rewarded by mutton broth and flannel petticoats. Of the vast mass of ill-fed and ill-housed subjects of the Crown, the Crown thought very little except as a "problem" or as the eccentric interest of such people as Lord Shaftesbury and Mr. Montefiore.

In the changed conditions of England to-day it is difficult to imagine any sensitive man or woman leading a long life without some contact with those socially less fortunate—but Mr. Benson's memories were already well stored long before the shifting process had set in, and he too gives the impression of being unaware of the existence of any interests outside the cathedral close, the courts of Cambridge, the salons of Mayfair, or the opulent studios of petted artists.

That does not mean that he has not written a very readable and entertaining book of memoirs. It is indeed the best that has appeared for some time, and will undoubtedly achieve a certain permanence in the literature of Victorian gossip. We like reading about "the great, the learned, the distinguished, and the ingenious." We are pleased to welcome any new stories about them, and not averse to be reminded of a number of old ones. There is a virtue even in pronouncing the chestnut a true conker—and this from personal knowledge Mr. Benson is often able to do. From the eighties onwards there were few men of real eminence whom he did not meet—and meet on terms of intimacy, so that his impressions of them are refreshingly genuine. This age is only too familiar with that type of gossip, gleaned on the fringe of garden parties, in which all is fatuous but nothing exceeds the fatuity of the complacent author. Mr. Benson, except for one or two notable lapses, as, for instance, when he is describing his father's admonitory approaches to the Prince of Wales over the baccarat scandal, retains his sense of humour unimpaired, and conducts us with great good fun through the leisured and luxurious times we never knew. How ironically comic, for instance, is his story of his father's aunt who, declaiming against the extravagance of her neighbours, said: "Give me a trout from my own stream, a grouse from my own moor, and an apple from my own orchard, and I ask nothing more."

One regrets, perhaps ungratefully, that he affords so little space to his general picture of the life of his childhood and maturer years and so much to the personal study of well known figures. His descriptions of the great Victorian dinner parties given by his father, followed by a little music and a game of "floral Lotto," are very well done indeed—so too are his gentle comparisons of the manners and conversations of the young people of that day and this. From a time when the mention of legs was taboo he has lived into another when "Sappho and salvarsan, the culture of the lower colon, the nuptials of Pekinese dogs are subjects of unembarrassed conversation between the sexes." In his wisdom he records no adverse judgment. As a comparison also of manners rather than of morals one cannot forbear to quote his story of that Duke of Beaufort, the picture of

whose mistress arrived at a moment when he was from home. His Duchess with great equanimity declared it an excellent "fancy" portrait and told the butler that his Grace would probably like it hung in his own room. But the time came when the faithless woman deserted her noble paramour. The Duke was disconsolate, and "being a thoroughly religious man, sought spiritual consolation in his trial; so the order went forth that the next Sunday every groom, coachman, and helper in the Badminton stables should attend church and receive the sacrament with their master."

From such hearsay Mr. Benson moves easily to the description of personal meetings with his father's friends and those he made for himself. With him we see Gladstone in all his vehemence, as energetic in upbraiding the company for not knowing how to pack a sponge (which is by wrapping it in your bath towel and stamping on it) as in his thunderous denunciation of an impertinent interrupter. There is the Marquis of Salisbury, the supreme Victorian, a little puzzled when taxed on his appointment of Alfred Austin as Poet Laureate, but pleading that to the best of his memory no one else applied for the post. There are "close-ups" of Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, Oscar Wilde, of the great ladies of the Court, of the Pre-Raphaelites, of the rebels, and in no case is Mr. Benson ever tedious or trite. Tennyson and Swinburne shared an appreciation for the bawdy story, and probably the later domination of Watts-Dunton at the Pines has never been better illustrated than in this brief conversation: "Shall I tell our visitor about the man of Peru?" Swinburne once asked Watts-Dunton. "I think that goes a little too far, Algernon," was the reply.

No book of memoirs has a better description of such notable incidents of the time as the baccarat scandal (though here, as I have said, it is difficult to swallow the whitewash), the downfall of Wilde, or the Whistler v. Ruskin trial. As a true son of Cambridge Mr. Benson delights in the stories of the combination room and contributes one most valuable original in his picture of a day in the life of Walter Headlam.

There is at least one note of interrogation in the book which must be passed on. Browning was once dining at the archiepiscopal board; "immensely genial, he ate and drank with a juvenile pleasure." Discussing his poems the Archbishop ventured on the remark that he enjoyed the lyrics most. As for lyrics, said Browning, he had "deskful of them." What *did* he mean—or did he perhaps not mean anything?

J. B. S. B.

THE WORLD WAR

Man versus Microbes. By NICHOLAS KOPELOFF. (Knopf. 21s.)

THIS is a book which can be warmly recommended to many different kinds of people: to those interested in health; to those interested in disease; to those seeking the entertainment and stimulation of fear; to those wishing for encouragement to admire man and his achievements; to pessimists; to dualists. Dr. Kopeloff, though he is a scientist, has written a book sufficiently free from technical terms to be easily read by the average person of intelligence, and though he is an American, it contains only two or three words unfamiliar to English readers. There are many illustrations and diagrams, and the enormous field of bacteriology and of the main infectious diseases is covered with enough detail to satisfy the layman. The opening chapters deal with the history of bacteriology and the types of known bacteria—their appetites, their enemies, and the hosts they patronize. Then the author considers the chief forms of infection in man and animals, giving the symptoms of each disease, a description of the usual course which it follows, the nature of the bacteria responsible, and the methods adopted by modern medicine for cure or prevention. The penultimate chapters deal with microbes in milk and other foods, in alcohol and as used in industry, and also with disinfectants and their values. Finally Dr. Kopeloff sums up the progress which has been made by man in the effort to check infectious diseases.

The present reviewer can give only a layman's opinion of this book, but since it kept her doctor an hour and a half from his patients without drawing from him any criticism

of its accuracy, she feels justified in saying that it can be read with at least as much confidence as most works of popularized science—probably with more confidence.

Nothing the Middle Ages believed of fiends or hobgoblins can compete in gruesomeness with the discoveries of bacteriology. The number of angels on the point of a needle is a tame affair in comparison with the number of bacteria on the rim of a sixpenny bit. Whether the great bacteriologists have been much influenced by the mystery of the subject, Dr. Kopeloff's study is too brief to indicate. Certainly the motives were powerful which led men to sacrifice their lives as Lazear and Noguchi did. The layman seldom realizes, except when he reads a book like this, how ineffectual the self-preservation which rules his life would be without the knowledge and the means of protection which such men have won for him by brilliant and prodigal sacrifice.

L. LL. I.

FOOTNOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Casual Observations. By ARTHUR PONSONBY. (Allen & Unwin. 6s.)

A Plain Man Looks at Life. By the REV. W. H. ELLIOTT. (Mowbray. 2s.)

The Death of Yesterday. By STEPHEN GRAHAM. (Benn. 8s. 6d.)

LORD PONSONBY has suffered, it seems, from a modest doubt in publishing his latest book. Was it worth while, he says, to reprint these very casual observations which had already appeared in the *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN* and other papers? But he had been approached, "from so many quarters," that he decided to take the risk. And, no doubt, he was right. For Lord Ponsonby, though not always stimulating, is always a pleasant companion. He is so reasonable, so modest, so well-informed; he gives you his personal experiences in so easy a way. The book contains thirty-six essays on all sorts of subjects, on Queen Victoria's letters, with reminiscences of Disraeli and the Queen, on a place called Stoke-Charity, on Biographies—an excellent essay—on "Masters of Balliol," with reminiscences of Jowett, on "the Increase of Population"—another good essay—on "Voice, Manner, and Tricks," &c. The publishers describe it as "an ideal book for the bedside or the train," which, perhaps, is not far out.

The Rev. Canon Elliott's attitude to life, as his profession demands, is always didactic, and even religious; but in these ten addresses, which have already been broadcast to thousands of "listeners," he does his best, you feel, to put off the bonds of clericalism and to adapt himself quite simply to the needs of the plain man, and the plain woman. (Very wisely, you will say, for the beauties, as a rule, have more exciting affairs on hand than the reading of addresses.) "What are we here for? What ought we to be aiming at? Where are we going to, you and I?" So he fires off his searching questions at our unoffending heads, and talks to us of the flight of time, and the formation of character, and the need of love and sincerity—how much Christ hated hypocrites!—and the beauty of Home Life. And does it all so admirably well that, as we read him, we feel ourselves urged to fresh efforts at self-discipline and improvement. The only doubt that troubles us is of a practical kind. It is a doubt whether these forcible discourses will find their way to those who might derive most profit by reading them, or only to those fortunate people, like ourselves, who are already among the converted. But that, of course, is always the preacher's difficulty: how to get through to the conscience of the publicans and sinners.

"He was the greatest essayist of his age," writes Mr. Stephen Graham of his former master Mr. G. K. Chesterton; "he was our Diogenes and the *DAILY NEWS* was his tub. He made it a political force—the universal nursery of young Liberals." But Chesterton of Battersea left his tub—owing, it was thought, to some dispute as to the respective merits of cocoa and beer, though there were also other causes—and became Chesterton of Beaconsfield, and a member of the Church of Rome, and no longer the greatest essayist of his age. That office, in fact, fell vacant, and so far as we know is vacant still. Who will fill it? Will it be Mr. Stephen Graham, who now gives us his first collection of literary essays—produced in many moods and through

much wandering, in the course of twenty years of "active authorship"? Hitherto Mr. Graham has been chiefly known to us by the amazing extent of his travels. What corner of the uncivilized world has he not visited? But he writes with remarkable charm—a little self-consciously perhaps, but always with wit and spirit. His first two essays on "Yesterday's Books," and on the "shut valley" of Vauluse, with its dark, clear waters—the meeting-place of Petrarch and Laura—are both admirably done. And there are studies of Vachel Lindsay and Carl Sandburg, and of Maxim Gorkhi and Dostoevsky, which are well worth preserving. Altogether a distinguished little group of essays, and one that, "amongst the one million books on every conceivable subject," of which Mr. Graham tells us, may perhaps have some chance of survival.

P. M.

AMAZONS AND OTHERS

Miss America. By W. J. TURNER. (Mandrake Press. 6s.)

Light in Six Moods. By GEORGE ROSTREVOR HAMILTON. (Heinemann. 3s. 6d.)

These Our Matins. By MICHAEL ROBERTS. (Elkin Mathews & Marrot. 3s. 6d.)

Dædalus. The Newdigate Prize Poem, 1930. By J. LANGTON FIELDING. (Blackwell. 2s.)

IN "A Trip to New York," published last year, Mr. W. J. Turner suggested that "the name of the New World across the Atlantic should be not America but 'Amazonia.'" In this belief he has now written the autobiography of one of the Amazons. She gives herself the generic name of "Miss America," but her real name is Altiora Peto, a name borrowed from a novel by Laurence Oliphant, an undeservedly neglected author, "the Aldous Huxley of his age," as Mr. Turner has called him. The original Altiora is "haunted by the standing obligation to 'seek higher things,'" but her American counterpart reluctantly admits that she has "craved both higher things and lower." After a stupid marriage she is divorced and then devotes herself to ensuring the "higher things" at least for her children. However, it is not what she does but what she thinks that matters. It is apparently because the Amazons are capable of original thought that America is "a country entirely dominated by women." Mr. Turner, however, is not entirely dominated by Altiora. He has already worked out his own ideas on America in sober prose, and it is inevitable that he should now begin by doing a little of Altiora's thinking for her. The second half of "Miss America" is far superior to the first. Altiora explains herself more clearly; her comments and reflections follow more naturally on the events of her life; and the rather difficult seven-line stanza is after some practice more at her command and capable of expressing both her emotions and her criticisms. The irony is enjoyable, and the satire, like much good satire, comes not from anger but from sympathy.

Mr. Rostrevor Hamilton has a reputation for being a gently philosophical poet, which his new book, "Light in Six Moods," does nothing to spoil. Without being too compelling, he works out his themes with an unjaded taste for imagery and a careful attention to phrase. It is to his credit that he avoids rhetoric, and his deft phrases convey something else beside their own deftness. In "These Our Matins," by Mr. Michael Roberts, on the other hand, the constant digging for the half-crown word and the wish to hammer out a compact and novel phrase at any cost consistently obscure the image. This is a pity, for among many nonsense verses there are others that show something of that compulsion which Mr. Hamilton lacks.

"Dædalus" was the subject chosen for the Newdigate Prize Poem this year, and it was a good one. It might easily have led the unwary into giving it a modernist aeronautical treatment, thus making the work of the assessors less difficult by elimination. Miss Langton Fielding was not misled into any such extreme, and her "Dædalus" was well worth doing, prize or no prize. One happy interpretation of the myth, which gives unity to the poem, is that the doom of Icarus comes as retribution upon Dædalus for the murder of Perdix, whom he threw from a cliff:—

"Too late, too late

He strove in terror towards the sheltering clouds;

As Perdix fell, he fell; and Dædalus saw
Again the anguish of despairing eyes,
More wide in terror since they fell to doom
From new-found life and long-wished liberty."

This conception is, I believe, original, but whether original or not, the beauty of its place in the poem is unimpaired. Originality is, after all, only a ready-reckoner to value.

JAMES THORNTON.

NEW NOVELS

The Great Meadow. By ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)

Madder Music. By MILDRED CRAM. (Harrap. 7s. 6d.)

Down the Sky. By E. V. LUCAS. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)

The Wings of Adventure. By PHILIP GIBBS. (Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.)

The Inheritor. By E. F. BENSON. (Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.)

Celeste. By STEPHEN HUDSON. (Blackmore Press. 18s.)

IN these post-war days lives are held as cheaply as in Elizabethan times, with this difference: men and women brave death for notoriety or some otherwise unattainable thrill—Elizabethans, like Sir Walter Raleigh and many others of that period, braved death for an ideal. The colossal egotism of the "stunter" does much to neutralize the bravery of his achievement. Adventures are blazoned on street placards, but the heroism of the single-minded passes almost unnoticed. Has any recent feat been finer than that of the young Italian woman, who, wearing long skirts and high-heeled boots and with her baby at her breast, defied the menace of the Zwillingsspass, in a region where only the most daring and experienced mountaineers venture, in an endeavour to evade the Italian Customs and rejoin her husband in France?

The theme of "The Great Meadow" is an epic of a small group of Virginian pioneers who followed Boone's trail through the wilderness to the land of Caintuck. Diony, the young bride, left her home and set out with her husband, Berk Jarvis, on her wedding day, knowing that there were five hundred miles of forest, river, and mountain between her and the insecure safety of her new home at Harrod's Fort. Diony's girlhood, her daily life on her father's farm, with each season bringing its ordained task, weaving linen during the winter months for use in the summer and spinning wool in the summer ready for the winter, is exquisitely described. These chapters are a joy to read; but even more memorable are the pictures of the almost mediæval life in Harrod's Fort, where the women were in desperate straits for clothing and food. Diony learnt to hackle the nettle and weave it into flax for cloth, to make a broom by shredding a hickory pole grain by grain. The fort was in hourly peril of attack by Indians. Men would go out and not return, and another widow would be left to the care of the garrison. Diony was attacked, but saved at the cost of her mother-in-law's life. The story of the relations between Berk, his mother, and his wife is masterly work, and it reaches a high plane of drama when Diony is forced to choose her destiny. The situation is unforced and unstressed. "The Great Meadow" is an event in to-day's literary history. If it is comparable at all, it might be compared with Knut Hamsun's "Growth of the Soil." Even then, Miss Roberts's vision is nearer to the heart of truth. Her writing shows love for the "lucky" word, and there is genius in the economy with which she gains her effects. Mr. Edward Garnett, who has written an introduction to the book, is to be congratulated once again on his discerning judgment.

It is a strange thought that, little over one hundred years later, possibly some descendants of these stalwart pioneers degenerated into the pseudo-civilized people whom Miss Cram dissects so ably in "Madder Music." This story gyrates round Kate Bateman, a grandmother and one-time public idol, friend of Liszt, Wagner, and Puccini; her son and numerous grand-children, each a temperamental exhibitionist in one of the arts. Elena, the actress grand-daughter, adopts a baby as another person would befriend a lost kitten. An adoption being too ordinary a story for her relations to accept, they insist for the sake of the family *éclat* that Nancy is Elena's illegitimate child. This brings its own complications, though nothing matters long to this hectic crowd. Mad as all these people appear, Miss Cram's knowledge of

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their psychology is impressive, and the book is bright and gay throughout.

"Down the Sky" is an "entertainment" in silver point. There is a charming conventional unconventionality in the relations between the wilful and fascinating Mrs. Candover and her Richard; their life together, including the voyage to Ceylon, makes delicious reading, though Richard appears unlike his gallant self when he refuses to take advantage of Mrs. Candover's widowhood. Was he afraid that marriage would make him look as respectable as he really was, or that it would dissolve the glamour with which he had surrounded the lady? The book is stamped with the skill and distinction of the author.

There are some capital short stories in "The Wings of Adventure," some so topical, like the one that gives the title to the book, as to recall recent happenings. Others, including "The Soul of Honour," are gleaned from the harvest of the war, a harvest of Dead Sea fruit. "The Provençal Dancer" fails to grip, and that perhaps because Sir Philip Gibbs has been too intent upon whitening a sepulchre. Otherwise, the tales are vivid and interesting.

The pipes of Pan are heard throughout "The Inheritor." Steven Gervaise, an elder son of a strangely cursed family, should have been something that was not quite man or beast, like all the elder sons of his line; instead, he is endowed with eerie beauty. His deformity was of the soul. But the curse was only in abeyance, and when his child, which he was not allowed to see, was born, it bleated like a goat. After a brief existence the creature was buried, where all the elder sons were buried, inside a Druid's circle. "Degenerate" wild grapes grew on Steven's lands, and all his Pan-like relations wore wreaths of vine leaves. The strangest thing in the book is the infatuation of Maurice Crofts, a young Cambridge Don, for Steven. That really wants a lot of explaining, or perhaps less explanation and a little more reason. This story of youth is, as can be gathered, unusual.

Mr. John Nash has illustrated "Céleste." Brilliant though his engravings are, he sometimes seems in doubt about the intentions of the author, which is quite understandable. A second reading of "Transmutation" failed to disentangle the threads of what appears to be a very small ball of worsted. The stories are slight, the symbols are too faint to be legible, and so fail to give their emotional interest full value. It is as if Mr. Hudson had so worked in eliminating unessentials that much of the essential had been erased in the process.

KATHLEEN C. TOMLINSON.

GOOD BOOKS ON GOOD SCULPTURE

Egyptian Sculpture. By M. A. MURRAY. (Duckworth. 15s.)

Florentine Sculptors of the Fifteenth Century. By the RIGHT HON. W. ORMSBY GORE, M.P. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d.)

Twentieth-Century Sculptors. By STANLEY CASSON. (Humphrey Milford; Oxford University Press. 9s.)

EACH of these three books is in its own way written in the light of that most commendable of modern literary precepts: "Be readable—even when you are writing a text-book." All of them might easily have been as dull as ditchwater if their authors had polished their personalities away from them, but as it is their personal aesthetics form only one of the quarries which lure a reader through their pages. Of the three authors Miss Murray is the one who is least inclined to comment, but the tendencies of her personal criticism become fairly clear in a hundred or so of her descriptive pages. The question of distortion and its motives is one which is pregnant for discussion and dissension in the consideration of the sculpture of any age, and it naturally becomes acute with Mr. Casson in dealing with the present day. Miss Murray is inclined to shelve it. She speaks of "convention" in general as a sign of decadence and of "naturalism" as a commendably vital quality, and an example of her comment is: "The knees are over-emphasized in the way common to all Egyptian statues, but at least the anatomy is correct, *which is more than can be said for the later sculpture*. . . . The ears are rather large, but *not unnaturally so*. . . .", &c. (my italics). Her tendency seems to be to consider distortion always as a product of religious ideals, or of arbitrary or conservative ideas, rather

than of purely æsthetic ones. The book is a mine of information, and the illustrations alone (there are over a hundred of them, excellent both in choice and reproduction) are an education.

(The Right Hon. Ormsby Gore's book is also in many respects a model for future reference.) He writes with clarity and distinction of the principal Florentine sculptors of the fifteenth century, and his illustrations also are excellent. When he comments, whether on single works or on sculptors themselves, his opinions are always respectable. Writing of Donatello, he says: "He knew that mere 'naturalism' or 'realism' is not enough. The truth must be a truth that can be told in marble and must be governed by the material medium of his art. Further, it must be a truth worth telling—a truth in nature selected for sculpture because that truth has in it elements of significance, of suggestiveness, of universality." He apologizes for this sentence ("these long words sound somewhat rhetorical"), but he need not do so. He has a happy knack of finding the right word, and this makes his writing pithy. "Brooding," of Michael Angelo, is an example. There are traces of a rather conventional austerity about some of his criticisms, but this only mars the general excellence of his book a little.

Mr. Casson's book deserves a longer discussion than can be given to it here, because his æsthetic is more personal, more definitely stated, and it consequently colours his book more than do the mere comments of Miss Murray and Mr. Ormsby Gore. Also, it is definitely at war with a great deal of contemporary criticism. "Twentieth-Century Sculptors" is to some extent a sequel to Mr. Casson's "Some Modern Sculptors," which was published in 1928. His outlook, roughly, is "Classical," anti-primitive, and anti-personal (in the "value-of-private-sensibilities" sense). His opinions are well stated, very readable, and highly controversial. On almost every page a reader itches to answer back. The thirty-three illustrations, mostly full-page, are finely reproduced, and the book itself is handsome and well printed.

JOHN PIPER.

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PARTIES

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Carl Van Vechten has returned to scenes reminiscent of his famous *Nigger Heaven*. In his laconic and sophisticated manner he tells of an aged German countess who comes to New York full of zest to explore its night-life, which she does in the company of B.Y.P., making desperate and heart-breaking attempts to amuse themselves in a weary and Prohibition-ridden age, saying—"We're here because we're here, and we should be extremely silly not to make the worst of it." "This vivacious satire—a clever study." *Times Lit. Supplement*.

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A LITERARY POCKET-BOOK

From the American Academy in Rome we have received the "Memoirs of the Academy for 1930," being Volume VIII. of the series. Their well-printed quarto is mainly devoted to an elaborate monograph on "The Pavements of the Roman Buildings of the Republic and Early Empire," by Marion Elizabeth Blake, whose analytic appreciation of typical pavements of various periods is illustrated by no fewer than fifty-five plates, which should be as much an inspiration to the modern designer as the work as a whole will be the delight of the antiquary. The volume also includes an essay on "The Pantheon of Ostia (and its immediate surroundings)," by Cecil C. Briggs. Another volume due to and illustrative of American enterprise is the annual record of the "Explorations and Field-work of the Smithsonian Institution in 1929," which bears eloquent and graphic testimony to world-wide research. The various essays are by the explorers themselves and are handsomely illustrated.

From Messrs. John Whitehead of Leeds we have received "Stuart Papers, Pictures, Relics, Medals, and Books, in the Collection of Miss Marion Widdrington," transcribed, annotated, and described by Francis John Angus Skeet. The bulk of the letters deal with the affairs of the Stuarts after the flight of James II., notably with the risings of 1715 and 1745. There are, however, two interesting documents relating to Charles II. Many of the papers that follow have considerable historical value; one is in unresolvable cipher, from either Orrery or Bolingbroke to "James III.," with interleaved sheets upon which the cipher may be worked out by the curious. The volume, finely printed on hand-made paper, with illustrations in photogravure, is published in a limited edition of 375 numbered copies.

Whether Mr. Harold Boulton has any authority in folklore or legend for the story of Fergus and the merrow-maid, the witch and the saint, told in "An Unrecorded Miracle of St. Columba" (Allan, 3s. 6d.), he does not explain; but if, as one imagines, it is pure invention, it is *ben trovato*; and although its narration is a little sophisticated—it is certainly coloured by modern anthropological knowledge—there does linger in it something of the ancient Gaelic glamour; and it is this glamour, no doubt, which inspired Mr. Archibald McDonald to retell it (in the same volume) in the ancient tongue. Should this Gaelic version become popular and travel by word of mouth, collectors of legend in years to come may find it difficult to discover the story's provenance.

In his volume on "Kent" (Bell, 6s.), Mr. S. E. Winbolt has made another attractive contribution to his series of country guides. Again he has the collaboration, as photographers, of Edgar and Winifred Ward. These artists have made a happy choice of subjects, and, among other notable studies, have succeeded in securing a superb picture of Romney Marsh. Anyone who knows that barren, windswept district must realize the difficulty of conveying through the camera its peculiar attraction. Certainly this lies largely in the racing clouds above, and to the sky alone the Wards have given three-quarters of their winter scene. Mr. Winbolt, precise in and judiciously sparing of his information, has written a handbook which no man of Kent could fail to value nor any "furriner" to Kent fail to find of use.

The summer's output of guide-books always gives rise to reflections on the nature which they can most usefully assume. Are we best accompanied on our travels by the gossip and impressions of the imaginative writer, or the massed and unilluminated information of Baedeker and his disciples? There can be no doubt that even for unsystematic sightseeing the Baedekers and Blue Guides are of the greatest value. They are models of painstaking accuracy and are to the traveller as the dictionary is to the writer, for reference in case of need rather than for protracted entertainment. Of such a nature is "A Satchel Guide to Spain and Portugal," by W. D. and S. G. Crockett (Allen & Unwin, 16s.). One regrets in this, as in many of its type, a growing inhumanity of treatment. The old guide-book was as helpful in its condemnations as its recommendations. It would state in round terms that the food in certain buffets and restaurants was uneatable, it would grade hotels according to their prices and amenities, and give neighbourhoods their character, either good or bad. The modern compiler seems content to tabulate a list of hotels without differentiation and assume that they are no more than sleeping-places for pilgrims to cathedrals and art galleries.

Mr. Louis Untermeyer, in his "Blue Rhine and Black Forest" (Harrap, 7s. 6d.), cannot be accused of this neglect. He has much to say about the varying qualities of the Rhine wines, and his useful glossary elucidates a German menu quite satisfactorily. For the rest his volume is a leisurely "hand and day book" to accompany the tourist down the Rhine and through the Forest. He is much occupied with local legend, which he repeats with animation as he passes from place to place. So in a more serious mood is Mr. Watkin Davies, whose "Wayfarer in Wales" (Methuen, 7s. 6d.) really does fulfil its object in revealing the characteristics of a people as well as country in a form most likely to appeal to a stranger.

In "The Leacock Book" (Lane, 5s.), Mr. Ben Travers regrets the difficulty of compiling such an anthology without disappointing some of Mr. Leacock's admirers. But Mr. Travers is admirably chosen himself to select what is really funny, and to discard the Canadian humorist's off-days. This reviewer looked instantly for his two favourite pieces, and lo, they were first and second in the book, and very properly the first of them was the preface to "Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town." Mr. Travers has at least provided a volume for the spare bedroom. A slim contribution to Lancashire humour is Mr. Nelson Jackson's "Lays from Lancashire" (Werner Laurie, 2s.), appropriately illustrated by Arthur Moreland. Mr. Jackson, whose entertainment at the piano is always popular, has strung together a number of tales of the "tackler," and versified them felicitously. The Secretary of State for War contributes a friendly preface, —and Mr. Tom Shaw, if anyone, should be believed if he certifies the integrity of Lancashire humour.

BRIDGE

By CALIBAN.

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR BEGINNERS AT CONTRACT—(I) DO'S

THERE is no short cut to success at Contract; but I think one can reasonably assemble—in the manner of Polonius—a few general rules which beginners will do well to bear in mind. I propose, then, to summarize, this week, some of the things which it is specially important he should do, and, next week, the things which it behoves him to avoid.

(1) Equip yourself with a working knowledge of the laws. The laws of Contract, as of Auction, are pretty complicated, and you can hardly expect to master all their intricacies. But at least you ought to know:—

- (i) How to score.
- (ii) What Dummy can and cannot do.
- (iii) What the rights of the players are in relation to:—
 - Incorrect deals.
 - Exposed cards.
 - Bids made out of turn.
 - Insufficient bids.
 - Cards led out of turn.
 - Revoking.

(iv) Whose business it is to exact a penalty.

(2) Play to the score. This is even more important at Contract than at Auction, on account of the increased premiums and penalties attaching to the vulnerable side.

(3) Try at every stage to *evaluate your risks*. The right line of action, whether in bidding or in play, is that which offers you, on a balance of probabilities, the maximum expectation of gain.

(4) Remember that Contract is a partnership game. To try and beat your adversaries off your own bat is no doubt very exciting; but it is also very expensive, and is poor fun for your partner.

(5) Remember that there are times when it pays to overcall, *i.e.*, deliberately to incur penalties rather than concede games, rubbers or slam premiums. *An overcall is only wrong when you lose more points by making it than you would have lost had you said nothing.*

Bidding.

(6) Practice assessing accurately the contents of your hand; and remember that to do this it must be valued in three ways:

- (i) It has a basic value which you can calculate in terms of honour tricks.
- (ii) It will have additional values (trump and distributional) in attack.

Public Opinion

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(iii) It will similarly have additional values in defence.
 (7) Endeavour to value not only your own hand but those of the other players by drawing inferences from the bids that they make.

(8) Try so to bid your hand as to convey, at every stage, as much and as precise information as possible.

Play of the Hand.

(9) Stop and think before playing to the first trick. Many games have been lost through the declarer snatching a card from Dummy before he has thought his problem out.

(10) Endeavour to draw a precise inference from every card played, and so build up in your own mind a picture of the hands held by your adversaries.

(11) Count the trumps.

(12) Play to the score. If one trick will save the rubber, make it while you are sure you can.

(13) Watch your partner's discards.

(14) Discard yourself so as to convey to your partner as much information as possible.

(15) Remember, however, that there are occasions when you will stand to lose more by giving information to the declarer than you will gain by giving it to your partner.

(16) Learn something about the probable distribution of the missing cards of a suit. You should know when your best chance is to finesse and when you ought to play for a "drop."

General.

(17) Study the psychology of those with whom you play. Some of your adversaries can be bluffed; some easily terrorized; some as easily lured into overcalling. Unless you can make the most of their various idiosyncrasies, you are not playing the best game possible.

(18) Trust your partner. He may be a rotten player; but if you show him that you think so, effective co-operation with him will become more difficult than ever.

(19) Try and keep your temper. To become "rattled" is not only disagreeable but extremely expensive.

(20) Remember that Bridge is a game that anyone can cheat at; its standard of ethics is for that reason exceptionally high. To indicate by inflection or gesture what kind of a hand you hold, or what card you would like played, is a serious violation of the unwritten laws of the game.

MOTOR NOTES

ON TAKING A CAR TO FRANCE

TWO friends of mine have just gone to France for their honeymoon, and the silly idiots have left their car behind in England; they said it was too much trouble to take it with them. Many other people have probably done the same thing for the same absurd reason, not realizing what fun they were missing by their lack of enterprise. Now the real motorists are those who attempt to motor for pleasure, and it is to them that this article is dedicated; for they will understand when I say that motoring in France is still attractive because it is still adventurous. But those who have not yet tried it had better hurry up; for France is growing more like England every day!

The first time I myself took a car to France was not long after the war, when the roads were nearly all in a terrible state. One broke springs frequently and shook off lamps, mudguards, and other attachments incessantly. A journey of any length was a serious undertaking. But although it was frightful while it lasted, there was a glorious sense of achievement when it was over, and one could revel in the makeshifts one had so ingeniously evolved in its course—the piece of turf to wedge up the radiator, the switch cut from the hedge for a throttle control, the yards of string that had finally kept the car from disintegrating altogether.

Nowadays, of course, they have changed all that, and the roads as a whole are very good. But it is still necessary to keep a sharp look-out. Otherwise one goes sailing along some beautiful smooth straight at a steady 70 m.p.h., only to be hurled without the least warning on to a shattering mass of pot-holes, that can only have been left there, like a bunker, to make the course more interesting.

The hazards of the road are, however, not the only things that make motoring more amusing in France than it is nowadays in England. Big towns are few and far between, villages small and unsophisticated, and traffic, even on the important roads, refreshingly scarce. Indeed, as one rolls easily along between the rows of tall poplars, one is irresistibly reminded of a voyage by sea. On and on, hour after hour, always at the same steady speed, for a long time sighting hardly another vessel, and then unexpectedly coming upon the whole fishing fleet congregated at the Smalls as one runs into the commotion of a French provincial town.

Of French garages I personally have very pleasant recollections. As a whole I have found them more efficient and, what is every bit as important, more willing than their English *confrères*. Also they always appear delighted to see one and one's uncouth English car, for English cars are about as uncommon in France as French ones are common here. I remember arriving at Blois one Saturday evening after five o'clock, with practically every front spring leaf broken. There was apparently only one oldish man at the garage I was recommended, but he cheerfully undertook the job. He made me a complete new set of springs and fitted them, and when I went round at eleven o'clock on Sunday morning, I found the car all ready to drive away. He must have worked half the night. Again quite recently I drove up to a big garage on the outskirts of Bordeaux. My car was a thoroughbred and needed pampering. I asked for pure Benzole, but they filled up my tank with something else by mistake. It was not long before I found it out, but I was too exasperated to go back. However I happened to come into Bordeaux the same way about a week later, and the garage proprietor saw me coming. He ran out into the road and stopped me, insisted on filling my tank with all the Benzole I wanted, made me a free gift of gallons of oil, and finally, what I appreciated most of all, took me off into a café opposite to celebrate over a bottle of a delicious St. Emilion his having had the good luck to meet me again.

And this leads me to why I have chosen France particularly for this article; for whereas only a few of us know German or Spanish, nearly everyone knows French more or less; and I do not believe anyone can ever really appreciate a foreign country unless he can speak the language. Half the charm of travelling abroad is in talking to all the stray people one comes across in hotels, cafés, and even garages. I myself invariably find entertainment even in the stock comparisons of country, customs and cars; not so much because anything is ever said that is specially original, but because of the unfamiliar idiom in which it is all expressed. And then what fun it is airing one's own French and trotting out with pride some new phrase that one has just learnt! The hotel boy in a little town in the Midi once asked me if I was a Belgian; and I look back on that as one of the nicest compliments I have ever had.

RICHARD PLUNKET GREENE.

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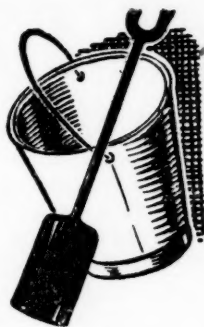
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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE TWO SLUMPS COMPARED—FOREIGN BONDS AND REVOLUTIONS—RUBBER

THE holidays are ending, but the general public is not returning to the Stock Exchange, as it used to do after a spell of August sunshine. Prices are therefore slipping back, the great "bear" squeeze is failing, and a few courageous operators are again selling "short." The recent recovery in markets was chiefly a technical or professional affair—a necessary correction of an "oversold" condition—not to be regarded as prophetic of the end of the trade slump. On account of the "short" position the rise in prices in many of the leading industrial shares was out of all proportion to the volume of business transacted. The following are some examples:—

	High 1930.	Aug. 25.	Sept. 5.	Sept. 10.
L.M.S. Rly. Ord. Stock	57½	32½	37½	35½
G.W. Rly. Ord. Stock	64	33½	71½	70½
Cables and Wireless 7½%	77	19½	32	28
do. do. "A" Ord. Stk.	89½	6½	17½	15
do. do. "B" Ord. Stk.	29/-	18/10½	23/4½	21/10½
Imperial Chemical £1	57/3	38/9	47/6	45/-
Courtauld £1	150/7½	57/6	75/-	71/3
Columbia Graphophone 10/-	15/4½	9/9	12/-	10/10½
Dunlop 6/8d.	81/9	28/9	37/6	38/9
United Molasses £1	66/3	42/6	52/6	40/4½
Unilever £1	86/8	53/9	67/6	64/4½
Turner & Newall £1				

In the period between August 25th and September 5th the thirty industrial ordinary shares in the FINANCIAL NEWS daily index rose from 72.6 to 81.0—a gain of 11.6 per cent. In fourteen days they had recovered the ground lost since June 30th. They have now slipped back to 79.7.

There are still some optimists who insist that prices will never be so low as they were on August 25th—that the recent recovery in markets was not a mere "secondary cycle," similar to the recovery last March, but the end of the great "bear" movement. For the reasons given last week I am inclined to look for lower prices this winter, but one cannot help being impressed by the extent of the slump last month. Although commodity prices have not yet fallen so steeply as they did in 1920-21, stock market prices have suffered worse. It is interesting to compare the security price indices of the INVESTORS' CHRONICLE for the 1919-21 boom and slump with those for January 28th, 1929, and August 25th, 1930, dates which our optimists would regard as the beginning and end of the 1929-30 slump:—

	Dec. 31, 1923 = 100.	1919-21.	1929-30.
	Dec. 31, 1919.	Dec. 31, 1921.	Jan. 28, 1929.
Home Rails	77.2	30.7	81.3
Brewery	90.5	*66.2	17.7
Chemicals	105.6	50.4	52.3
Coal	122.1	90.3	26.0
Gas and Electricity	66.1	*60.3	8.8
Hotels and Catering	98.3	70.7	28.0
Iron and Steel	162.5	90.6	44.2
Newspapers	76.7	*66.5	13.2
Shipping	108.8	101.2	49.1
Silk	90.5	62.9	30.5
Other Textiles	123.0	68.5	40.9
Miscellaneous	180.5	77.5	57.1
Index "General Business"	119.1	74.7	37.2

* These were the low levels reached on December 31, 1920.

† This was the low on February 24, 1930.

It will be seen that the percentage fall in the prices of industrial shares at August 25th this year had already exceeded that in the great 1920-21 depression. It may be worth observing that the first groups to recover from the 1920-21 slump were brewery, newspaper, and gas and electricity shares, and that the steadiest group in both depressions has been gas and electricity shares. That newspaper shares should have suffered so much more this time than last may be explained by the "war" (now settled) between the newspaper peers.

The slump in the German 5½ per cent. Reparations loan, which has fallen from its issue price of 90 to 84½, is not

due to any rumours of wars or revolutions, but to the selling of those who wish to exchange into the Continental Reparations issues. Revolutions, however, have lately figured in the foreign bond market news. To the investor in fixed-interest securities who prefers a political to an economic risk—that is, a foreign government or municipal bond to a commercial or industrial debenture—there is only one kind of revolution that matters, namely, communism *versus* capitalism. Other varieties of political disorder do not as a rule involve debt repudiation. Revolutions of the Latin-American type, although enlivened occasionally by street fighting, bloodshed or assassination, are regarded, I imagine, as comparatively harmless by the Council of Foreign Bondholders. Indeed the dismissal at the point of a gun of an aged President of the Argentine who had become incapable of signing, or unwilling to sign, cheques, hardly caused a ripple in the foreign bond market. All the South American republics with the exception of Chile have in the last hundred years defaulted at various times in payment of coupons or in sinking fund appropriations, but none has ever threatened repudiation of debt in the Russian manner.

Governments in need of money cannot afford to strike at the foundations of capitalism. Of course, if revolutions are as frequent as they have been in Mexico, Government finances are thrown into disorder and a break-down in the debt service becomes inevitable. But even Mexico made serious attempts—in 1922 and 1925—to settle its obligations to its bondholders, which date back to 1914 when the Federal debt fell into default, and the recent agreement (in July) between the Mexican Minister of Finance and Mr. Thomas W. Lamont, chairman of the International Committee of Bankers in Mexico, may provide the solution of the Mexican debt problem. If a settlement could at last be secured with the Soviet Government with regard to the Russian external debt, it would only leave the Southern States of the U.S.A. as the arch-exponents of debt repudiation. The recent decision of the Arbitration Court in favour of the Lena Goldfields claim against the Soviet Government does not help the forthcoming conference between the Russians and ourselves on claims and counter-claims, but the "five-year plan" is some incentive for the Soviet to come to terms, if only to obtain new money.

Rubber has been breaking new low records. The decision of the Straits Government against any form of restriction caused the spot price of rubber to drop to 3½d. per lb., which is the lowest ever recorded. In 1922, before the Stevenson restriction scheme came into operation, the lowest price touched was 6½d. The highest point reached under the restriction scheme was 4s. 8d. per lb. in 1925. In 1928 when restriction was removed the price fell to 7½d. A reader of THE NATION recently objected to my remark that the restriction scheme was the beginning of all evil. Perhaps I should have said that it was the end of all evil, for, by encouraging native production and stimulating the reclaiming of used rubber, the restriction scheme is primarily responsible for the present crisis in the rubber world. If we look for a beginning of the evil, it is to be found in the faulty organization of the industry. It is impossible to stabilize an industry working with many hundreds of small producers and no central selling organization. Companies without strong cash resources must now go into liquidation or amalgamate on the best terms possible with stronger producers. Shareholders must appreciate that cash at the bank or a block of gilt-edged securities will now decide the chances of survival or amalgamation.

